

# SEVEN DAYS

**MINDFUL  
MASSES?**PAGE 26  
A tech-savvy monk  
with a mission**CODE CRED**PAGE 24  
Circ Hacking Day in VT**JUST US CHICKENS**PAGE 46  
Kathryn Flagg on the poultry craze**HE'S STILL HAPPY**PAGE 62  
Bobby McFerrin gets spintytouail

## FINDING HER VOICE

Gretchen Parlato  
is redefining the role  
of vocals in jazz

BY DAN BOLLES • PAGE 28

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# contents

MAY 29-JUNE 5, 2013 VOL. 18 NO. 25

LOOKING FORWARD



## NEWS

- 14 Need Legal Farmwork?**  
Call Aileen Eustman  
BY KATHRYN FLAEG
- 16 State Audit Complaint**  
Operation for Sales Tax  
Not Imposed on Chemical  
Fertilizers  
BY KEN FLEGG
- 18 The \$50 Million Question:**  
Is Vermont Working Hard  
Enough to Give Other  
People's Money Back?  
BY HILDA MCHAMBERLIN

## FEATURES

- 26 Finding Her Voice**  
Musica Ormiston Parleto is  
redefining the role of female in  
jazz  
BY DAN ROLLES
- 32 The New Mindfulness**  
Release Education: How a truly  
everybody is taking meditation  
to the masses  
BY KATHRYN FLAEG
- 34 Conscientious**  
Cedars  
Technology Vermonters build  
community-minded apps at the  
National Day of Civic Hacking  
BY ANDREW VIERA
- 37 Tales of the Dead and**  
the Living  
Reeks: A North Country Tale  
Tales of 'Madness, Misery,  
and Middley' I Hear Thinkings of  
Beauty, Sydney Lee  
BY HANNAH ANDERSON

## ARTS NEWS

- 32 Green Mountain Opera**  
Kicks Off With Young  
Artists, Masters, Mystery  
and Humour  
BY AMY LILLY
- 33 With Two During Weeks,**  
Actor David Schain Brings  
the Rungin-Kim San  
Francisco Theater Scene  
to Vermont  
BY PAMELA POLSTON
- 34 In Middlebury, Edward**  
Hopper's Vermont  
Paintings Reveal  
Evolutionary Style  
BY KENNY J. KELLEY

## REVIEWS

- 67 Music**  
The Inaugural, Be There, Loers  
McIntire & Chris Clark,  
Chamberlain
- 78 Movies**  
Whisper 33, Rise & Furius 6



## FUN STUFF

diving club  
musician's critical  
theater and biology  
club regulars  
wine festival  
watermelon season  
jazz in the mountains  
microcosms  
theater and art  
festival  
theater with a twist  
theater and art  
festival

## CLASSIFIEDS

vehicles C-2  
housing C-2  
services C-2  
homebased C-2  
buy the stuff C-2  
for sale by owner C-4  
real estate C-4  
employment C-5  
logos C-5  
volunteer C-5  
event planning C-5  
personal services C-5  
jobs C-5

## COLUMNS

- 12 Fair Games**  
Open session on Vermont politics  
BY PAUL LEMAY
- 21 Drawn & Panoled**  
Panel program from the  
Center for Cartoon Studies  
BY J
- 27 Hackle**  
A Vermont cobbler's near view  
BY JEROME FONTAINE
- 43 Side Dishes**  
Food News  
BY CORIN HIRSH & ALICE LEWITT
- 63 Soundbites**  
Mass media and views  
BY DAN ROLLES
- 70 Gallery Profile**  
Visiting Vermont's art world  
BY REGAN JONES
- 85 Mistress Maeve**  
Your guide to love and lust  
BY MISTRESS MAEVE

## STUFF TO DO

- 11 The Magnificent 7**
- 46 Calendar**
- 59 Classes**
- 62 Music**
- 70 Art**
- 78 Movies**



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6/6

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# the MAGNIFICENT 7

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## SATURDAY 01 AROUND THE WORLD ①

Violinist **Rachel Barton Pine**'s career includes 36 acclaimed efforts, top prizes in international competitions and appearances with the world's best orchestras. In prodigious talent, performs a varied global program of sonatas by Beethoven, Strauss and Grieg and composer Hector Villa-Lobos, as well as a piece written for her by 27-year-old composer Mohammed Perout.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 54

## SATURDAY 01 BUGGIN' OUT ②

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em! **Louis** takes this adage to heart at the **Adolescent Blackfly Festival** with light-hearted activities that mark the seasonal emergence of these pesky insects. Family-friendly events include a themed fashion show, entomological spelling bee, parade, live music and more.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 52

## ③ WEDNESDAY 05 Powering Down

Upon realizing that the street house he Calcutta neighborhood renamed on after named, 80-year-old legend of film-to-designer embarked on an extraordinary journey. In his diary, he revealed filmmaker **Sumit Ghosh**, who said the environmental crusader alongside other activists in **Shyama Devi Tanna Out the Lights**, a resulting environmental protest movement took through the eyes of a 12-year-old girl named.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 57

## ④ SATURDAY 06 & SUNDAY 02 Down the Rabbit Hole

Dramatography and costumes meet magic and mystery when **Waking Light Dance Company** brings **Alice in Wonderland** to the stage. More than 100 dancers, numerous elements of ballet, modern dance including (at the stage of a young girl), ventures with a cast of colorful characters, including the Cheshire Cat, Mad Hatter and Queen of Hearts.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 53

## ⑤ SATURDAY 01 Flocking Together

Be an art aviator, bring your flock to the festival to the **IndieFest**. Celebrate nature with, through nature, birds, then take the makers, inventors and learn about the once endangered passenger pigeon. Ruddy birders hand to the kids, less for struggling, endangered birds and adults. A **War on the White** birds, saving threatened birds and a massive round out the fun.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 53

## ⑥ SATURDAY 01 Vocal Range

SEE INTERVIEW ON PAGE 56

## ⑦ THURSDAY 30 Creativity With a Conscience

In the face of ecological crisis, glass and wood, will rise the artists in **Godard Art Gallery** (masks) made exhibit **Uncovering & Unveiling** (masks) something is say. As part of **Uncovering & Unveiling**, **Donna's Art's Fair** will, welcoming from paintings and other art to sculpture and video to create a dialogue about environmental issues from an unspoken and significant perspective.

SEE SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 70

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## Seller's Remorse

**P**erhaps the saddest part of last week's December drama involving a wealthy governor and his distant neighbor is that *none* of us seems terribly surprised.

Anyone who's followed Gov. **PHIL SHUMLIN**'s career for any length of time knows that the guy lives extravagantly (and a deal or two on living dangerously).

How else can you explain why an ambitious politician would cut a land deal with an ex-con in the thick of his reelection campaign? Or why he would negotiate with a man who appears to have demolished mental capacity—without assuming that the man was *incapable* of consent?

But that's exactly what landed the governor in a heap of trouble last week when the man, along with his relatives and friends, told reporters he now regrets selling his family's land to Shumlin for less than a quarter of its assessed value. Further enraging the political peck of the station was confirmation from U.S. Attorney **DAVID CORHAN** that "the FBI followed up on a tip" about the situation, though, he said, "there's no active investigation in our office."

In a series of one-on-one interviews Shumlin granted members of the media late Friday afternoon, the governor argued the entire episode was no example of his own gaudiness. Demanded in a casual green-and-red plaid shirt in his office overlooking the stunning Stowe house, Shumlin said he was motivated by the urge to help the man turn his life around.

"To tell you the truth, I couldn't walk away from the guy," Shumlin said. "I just felt like, here was a neighbor in terrible straits. It could work for him and it could work for me, and I was in."

"That about changed? With a neighbor like that, you'd be wise to build a taller fence."

At the center of the drama is 53-year-old **JAMIE DOUGLAS** of East Montpelier, who by his own admission, "has been in and out of jail since [he] was 16." Last summer, Dodge lost the dubious luck to find that Shumlin and a group of friends and campaign contributors had bought up 182 acres next door and split off 27 of them for Shumlin to build a 2,000-square-foot "governor's cabin."

At first, their neighborly relationship seemed mutually beneficial. Dodge was scrambling to get by on the \$30,000 he earned washing part-time at the Salve Regina Army in Keen, and Shumlin was happy to pay him to be his driver's hand.

"It helped me a lot, at different times, when no one else would," Dodge says of Shumlin.

Last fall, the news of East Montpelier sought to collect \$120,000 Dodge owed in back taxes by auctioning off the 18-acre property. Dodge turned to the governor for help. Shumlin raised it at once, encouraging Dodge to reach out to his family instead, but the governor eventually acquiesced.

With a tax sale looming, Shumlin presented Dodge with a \$42,000 offer scratched on the back of a file folder several weeks later, on the day after Shumlin was reelected: the two closed on a \$38,000 deal. At the time, the property was appraised at \$233,700, though a subsequent appraisal requested by Shumlin slashed its value to \$140,000 because of the house's terrible condition.

## DODGE'S FRIENDS AND FAMILY ACCUSED SHUMLIN OF TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A MAN WHO LACKED THE CAPACITY TO FEND FOR HIMSELF.

"It seemed good to me, it really did," Dodge said last Thursday during an interview outside the spacial home in which he grew up and now has one child, Justin. Wearing a black Harley-Davidson T-shirt and a pair of faded jeans, the gaunt, toothless man struggled to articulate himself through a creaking smoker.

Dodge said he'd felt relieved when Shumlin said he would let him stay in the house through July 15. But the temporary reprieve came at a steep cost. Back into the purchase price was a \$9000 charge for nine months of rent. (Another \$9000 was contingent upon Dodge clearing up the place.)

"That would keep me out of jail—for a year, anyway," Dodge said, while wincing up home less would rotate the terms of his parole.

By Christmas, Dodge said, he'd saved on the deal. After consulting with friends and family, he realized a tax sale would have let him stay on the land for a full year—three months longer than Shumlin offered—and would have given him a chance to raise the money to pay his back

taxes and qualify the sale.

"I screwed up," Dodge said. "I should've found a way to find somebody else, somehow, to help."

In interviews last week, Dodge's friends and family accused Shumlin of taking advantage of a man they said lacked the capacity to fend for himself in negotiations with a governor who owes more than \$5 million worth of real estate.

"He didn't want to give it away, but he thought that was his only option. He thought that was his last chance," said Dodge's son, Shawn, a 19-year-old Vermont National Guardsman.

"Everyone wants to leave the same thing: Was Jerry Dodge capable of making this decision? In the 40 years I've known Jerry, I think not," said Keen resident **DAVID CORHAN**, a lifelong friend of Dodge's. "If you grew up with Jerry, you know there's a mechanism in his brain that's not working correctly."

Shumlin disagrees with that assessment, saying, "I have never had any reason to doubt Jerry's understanding of exactly what he was doing."

Making matters worse, Dodge negotiated the deal without an attorney.

"I advised him I had no money for a lawyer or anything like this. I don't know anything about pro bono or anything like this," Dodge said, referring to pro bono legal aid.

He contends that Shumlin suggested they simply use the governor's attorney to arrange the deal. Shumlin, meanwhile, says he'd best be left to talk Dodge into finding a lawyer, but Dodge refused.

"I sat with her a couple times before signing," Dodge said of Shumlin's lawyer. "She advised me [to get] legal counsel and of this stuff, you know I'm a long. I couldn't afford one, so I went with what was written and signed where I need to sign and get it over with."

It's hard not to sympathize with Dodge's plight.

A tour of his home makes clear that he is either unable or unwilling to take care of himself. The place is dirt, littered with refuse and reeks of dog and cat urine. And everyone mumbles in wonder if it was for filthier but full, when the power failed and the septic system backed up.

Worse yet is that, and recently, nobody seems to have been visiting to Dodge's aid. In the past week, his friends and family have become unresponsive in the media. Corhan—the scandal's **WASH. POST** OF **DAVID CORHAN**—has appeared in nearly every

news story, opening to any reporter who will listen about Dodge's mental capacity. His daughter, Rochelle, tearfully told WCAX-TV last Thursday she's now working to get her father into an assisted-living facility.

But where were they all before the camera descended upon East Montpelier seven weeks before Dodge's scheduled election?

And why didn't town officials point out to Dodge that his \$469,950 annual tax bill could have been drastically reduced had he simply declared his property a homesteaded estate?

**POLITICS**  
For property-tax abatement?  
An former Republican state representative, **BURTON OLSEN**

has pointed out, Dodge's \$18,000-a-year income should have made him eligible to pay no more than \$500 a year in taxes.

The answers may be out there troubling them the questions. After a string of arrests — most recently for domestic abuse — those who know him best may have grown tired of trying to help. And the town in which he lived may have been happy to see him go.

"What I can tell you is that Jerry is not a saint. He has done awful things to people — mostly women," Shumlin said. "When Jerry is sober and off drugs, he's a compelling and interesting guy to be with. I've been told that when he is an addict of alcohol and drugs, you don't want to be near him — and that's Jerry's challenge."

Stepping into the breach — at least as his own version of events — was an unlikely hero: Shumlin himself.

The very governor explained a Friday afternoon, after he sanctioned reporter into his Privileged State Office building suite, "There was no one else in line to step up to help, and the outcome for Jerry would've been very bleak."

Had he not bought the property and renamed Dodge's estate in the governor's name, the man would have been stuck in the place — let alone another year. And now that Dodge is having second thoughts about the deal, he says he's perfectly happy to extend his neighbor's stay and revisit the deal — so long as Dodge has a lawyer present.

Shumlin's narrative is compelling, but there's one detail that truly troubles.

Since Vermont Press Bureau Chief **PETER HANSEN** broke the story last week, there have been conflicting news accounts about who approached whom about the possibility of Shumlin purchasing the property.

On Friday, the governor confirmed it was he who first brought it up to Dodge after he "started having rumors about

a tax sale" and visited the town office to inquire about it.

"I brought it up with Jerry when we were cutting wood one day," Shumlin said. "As a courtesy, I wanted him to know that if his house was coming up for tax sale that you know, I was an interested party... I didn't want him to feel like I was looking into it around his back."

Shumlin's interest in the property should come as no surprise. Its 16 acres are not pretty but they sit right beside his newly built cabin. Each structure is visible to the other through the trees.

What's troubling about that one last statement from Shumlin's own telling, it looks less like he was carefully responding to a neighbor's request for help and more like he was seeking a new acquisition for his real-estate kingdom. That might explain why the gov didn't bother trusting Dodge like any other consistent taxpayer how he could reduce his tax burden.

Shumlin, it seems, set the hook and then reeled in his fish. Rather than risk a bidding war at auction — or the possibility that Dodge could make enough cash in the subsequent year to cancel a tax sale — the gov managed to buy the place for a song.

And he even managed to look like a hero — at least in the eyes of Jeremy Dodge.

It would be easier to assume good intentions if Shumlin himself didn't make it so damn hard. But in his brief two and a half years in office, the governor has cultivated a reputation for toying out of both sides of his mouth.

In this year's legislative session alone, he showed a willingness to accept offers of money from men with even proposals would raise them for higher. And he was perfectly happy to fairly claim just one week ago that a proposal to cut taxes on most Vermonters — but raise them on his wealthy contributors — would result in a net tax increase.

It would be nice to believe that Shumlin was the one decent person in this whole and mess, but he hasn't given us much reason to believe. We can only hope that the resolution of this saga will do.

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# Need Legal Farmworkers? Call Alyson Eastman

by KATHLEEN F. LAPP

**W**hen Ben Patrick Leahy needed someone to explain to Congress why Vermont farms need legal migrant laborers, he didn't write a bill and send dairy farmers to his house in June. He called upon Alyson Eastman, a 36-year-old accountant and bookkeeper from Duxbury, to testify on the federal immigration overhaul.

Eastman has the distinction of owning the only business in Vermont that handles H-2A visa applications for farms and orchards that rely on migrant laborers for seasonal agricultural work. She purchased Book Ends Associates from a relative three years ago, and now in out of a small, cluttered office across a driveway from the 270-acre dairy farm where she grew up. Her business, which employs six other Vermonters, provides accounting and payroll services for local farms, but H-2A work accounts for 40 percent of her revenues.

"She's carrying however many million dollars of our produce industry on her back, not just too close a point on it," says Rep. Will Stevens (I-Shoreham), an organic vegetable farmer. "She's doing people's work."

At a U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on April 22, Eastman testified in favor of expanding the temporary worker program to cover year-round workers, including those on dairy farms. At present, only farms in Vermont for seasonal work qualify, which is why dairy farms that seek



Alyson Eastman, owner of Book Ends Associates, with three other people and a dog in front of a red barn with "ADAMS TURKEY FARM" written on it.

yearly for processing and get calls at 6:30 in the morning that "I'm not feeling well today," or "I'm hungover today," or, "Such and such can't give me a ride today," says Judy Adams.

Eastman helped the Adams navigate the byzantine process of hiring two Jamaicans, Omar Edwards, and Evelyn Greenwell, on H-2A visas. Knowing the farm was in capable hands, the couple even got away for a quick overnight to Monte this year.

"That was huge for us," Judy Adams says. "Dennis and Omar — I trust them. They can handle whatever comes up as I would handle it... We're such a team. We just click."

The H-2A program could disappear entirely with the immigration reform bill Congress is considering now. As passed by Leahy's committee, the bill would phase out the existing program within one year, replacing it with a new agreement to be entered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Supporters of the change, which would allow workers to stay for up to three

years, say it would be too burdensome for employers than the H-2A program.

Eastman favors the new approach because it would allow dairy farmers to hire legal foreign workers for the first time. Her own family sold their dairy land in 2004, in part because they couldn't find legal, reliable domestic employees.

It would be hard to compare to the H-2A program. Some of the state's largest orchards used to handle the paperwork at home. But administering it — which requires immediate attention to detail, as applications can be rejected over the smallest inconsistencies — has become too much for most employers to handle on their own.

Eastman puts in up to two months of legwork to bring on workers for her clients. She places advertisements in Vermont and out of state newspapers — a Department of Labor requirement to prove that the seasonal jobs can't be filled domestically. She and one of her employees also draft detailed "job order" contracts, outlining specifics such as a worker's duties, start date and housing.

In addition to the bill, Eastman is juggling paperwork for immigration

officials and the U.S. State Department, working with recruiters, and coordinating with the labor ministry in Jamaica and the embassy in Mexico.

A botched application can result in a worker shortage at a crucial time of year, and crop insurance doesn't kick in if a farmer's labor force gets held up by H-2A hiccups.

"We do our best to cross our Ts and dot our Is," says Judy Adams.

The most recent H-2A handbook relates to income taxes. The Internal Revenue Service is taking more of seasonal workers, from requiring them to get Social Security numbers to requiring that their employers file W-2 wages and tax statements for them. While Eastman began filing these additional forms as early as 2008, she says that it wasn't clear until 2011 — when past due notices began trickling in — that the IRS had changed its expectations regarding income taxes for the work force. The deadlines, H-2A workers were not expected to pay state or federal income taxes.

Some of the unique challenges of working with a transient workforce

## Immigrant Ion

Not all workers have reliable addresses at home in Jamaica, some are itinerant, and employees often drive additional scrutiny from the IRS when they file workers' W-2s.

"It's not easy, and you'd better play by the rules, because you're going to get audited. Those are the first two things I tell people when they come into the H-2A program," says Eastman.

**Vermonth**  
Department of Taxes followed in the 1980s footings, and, starting last year, tried to collect back income taxes due between 2008 and 2011. Employees scolded the state. Some worried their workers would be denied entry to the U.S. because of unpaid tax bills, while others feared losing laborers to New Hampshire, which doesn't collect state income tax.

Vermont lawmakers assembled for a session, and ultimately tackled a provision into this year's agriculture budgeting bill — H.515 — that forgives state income taxes for H-2A visa holders between 2008 and 2011. Workers are still on the hook for 2012 income taxes, and federal income taxes won't be forgiven at all.

Severe estimates show Vermont back taxes would have amounted to a total of less than \$100,000, Eastman puts the figure even lower and suggests the state might have spent more to collect these taxes than it would have brought in.

How does Eastman get paid? She charges a flat rate for her service, based in part on the number of workers an employer needs. Her clients range from small operations that need just one or two workers to a larger orchard in New York State that employs more than 200. But it's worth the price for Vermont farmers. Once the visas are approved, Eastman says workers can be on the farm within 48 hours.

The farmers pay to transport them, which costs an average \$1000 per worker. Barney Hodges, who owns the 260-acre Sunrise Orchards in Canaan,

says he's budgeting \$50,000 this year to bring over the 45 Jamaican workers he'll need to harvest and pack apples. Those workers earn \$10.94 per hour.

Although he describes the H-2A as an "extremely cumbersome program," Hodges admits that his business couldn't survive without temporary workers. Whatever program ends up replacing it has to meet the orchard's needs in planning for its future, Hodges says. He's identified the potential loss of a guest worker program as one of Sunrise's "primary threats."

Most of the orchard's 45 workers come for the apple harvest, from mid-August to early November, eight or so stay through April to pack apples. Hodges' workforce ranges in age from 22 to 72, and he estimates that some 80 percent have been returning to the orchard for at least 20 years. "A lot of these guys know me when I was a kid," says Hodges, who grew up

on the family orchard.

Why not hire locally? Hodges says that simply isn't an option.

"We are eager, trying to find 45 workers who are reliable, consistent, have a high quality standard and take a lot of pride in their work to do a very difficult job in a state like Vermont — you're just not going to find it, period," says Hodges.

Hodges says Sunrise has never turned down a domestic employee who wants to pick apples, but only gets two or three interested applicants each season.

These U.S. workers who do take agricultural jobs tend not to last, Eastman adds. "The maximum pay seen a U.S. worker stay in these picking positions is two weeks," she says. One orchard hired eight American workers a few years ago for picking positions. After two weeks, only one was left, and he asked for a transfer from the fields to the packinghouse.

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# State Audits Compost Operation for Sales Taxes Not Imposed on Chemical Fertilizers

BY KEN PICARD

It's been a rough 12 months for Vermont's compost industry. Last June, Green Mountain Compost learned its product had been contaminated with herbicides. The tainted compost withered many organic gardens throughout the state.

Two months later, a far less publicized crisis hit Vermont Compost Company in Montpelier. The business received a letter from the Vermont Department of Taxes indicating it was being audited for failure to collect sales tax on compost sold since 2009.

Owner Karl Hammer, whose company has been making and selling compost since 1994, initially thought it was an error. For years, he operated under the assumption that compost was a non-taxable commodity, just like seeds, starter plants, fertilizers and animal bedding.

Shortly after the first letter, Hammer got a second, stating he owed \$394,000 in unpaid back taxes. It gave him 30 days to submit an audit.

"That did get my attention," he says. "And that's where we went through the book-keeping."

Unbeknownst to Hammer, Vermont had written new tax rules in 2009 that listed tax-exempt products for commercial growers. The list included animal feed, bales of straw, turkey poops and ball manure from synthetic feedlots—which is made from feed lots—was on the list. But organic compost and manure were not.

"There's a whole food justice issue here," Hammer argues. "The tax deposit mail is saying that organic farmers, by choosing organic methods, are subject to 10 percent tax that chemical farmers are not subject to."

To add insult to injury, Dugout growers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and New York can buy Vermont compost tax-free.

Hammer is the only known compost manufacturer under review by the Department of Taxes. Of course, he calls their "comment on Hammer's case, which is ongoing, not will they say whether or not three manufacturers and sellers of compost, manure and other 'soil amendments' are being audited."

"It's a weird policy if you don't want any taxes," says state Rep. Will Stevens (D-Shelburne), who owns Stillacre Golden Rooster Farms. He buys 100



tons of product from Vermont Compost every year.

Stevens, who also serves on the House Committee on Agriculture, argues that Vermont's tax law is treating compost differently than any other raw commodity used in wholesale production. For compas-

ion, he gives the example of a Vermont furniture manufacturer who buys locally harvested wood to make chairs. From the felling of the tree to the making of the chair, it's all in "touch" with soil, until the chair is sold to a customer. The same goes for all other "products in nature"—wheat, glass, fish, etc.—used in making things.

How, compost was left off the tax-exempt list in 2009 remains a mystery. Joe Doolley is lead tax policy analyst for the Vermont Department of Taxes, but says he didn't write the regulation on compost. Nor does Doolley know why chemical fertilizers remain a mystery.

"The department's stance has always been that, because compost doesn't fall into any of the exceptions, it's taxable," he says. "And because it's tangible personal property and doesn't fit into any of the exceptions, we have to apply the law the way it's written."

Nevertheless, Doolley insists that there's "definitely no particular intention by the department to single out this industry."

Hammer argues that the tax department's aggressive pursuit of his company is at odds with the goals of Act 168, a state law enacted last year that's intended to boost the state's recycling efforts and completely ban the landfil-

ling of organic materials by 2020. Every year, his company recycles about 890 wet tons of food scraps from the Central

Vermont Solid Waste Management District. That biodegradable material comes from 75 food generators throughout Washington County, including his pet's, food on cups, supermarkets and public schools.

As a proponent of locally sourced products, Hammer says he likes the flexibility. Hammer warns that Vermont will force a composting crisis if it continues to punish businesses like his.

And it goes beyond that. "Investing in the soil of the farmer is a very good investment over time," he says. "All indications that let the soil sell come to us, and."

When Will Hammer got his own closure with the Vermont Department of Taxes? He's negotiated the bill down to about \$100,000, but says he just learned that some of his heavy machinery is considered "contaminated." That not only, he explains, means that if backhoes and excavators are used more than 4 percent of the time for "post production" work, such as

loading bags of compost onto customers' trucks, they're also subject to sales tax.

"The situation of this audit is just outrageous," he says. "They just decided that certain pieces of my equipment are contaminated and added another \$10,000 to my bill."

Though Hammer is the only known business currently under scrutiny, the audit is causing confusion among other compost producers. Rob Foster, owner of Foster Brothers Farm and Vermont Natural Ag Products of Middlebury, says he isn't sure whether he should charge sales tax on compost he sells to a professional landscaper who may use it for one purpose that has traditionally been tax exempt (such as a vegetable garden) and another that has not been (such as fertilizing a lawn).

"There's just a awful lot of confusion around this subject," says Foster, whose company makes the "Man Do" line of potting soil, compost and manure, and is one of the largest compost facilities in the state.

Pat Regal, director of the Composting Association of Vermont in Westfield, says that in light of Hammer's situation, some compost sellers are charging sales tax while others are not. The Composting Association isn't advising its members one way or the other.

Regal says a legislative fix to the compost tax is in the works. Last summer, the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets proposed the House Ag Committee with language to address this problem, but the 2015 session ended before the committee could take up the bill. According to Rep. Stevens, the bill will be a "priority" when the legislature reconvenes in January.

In the meantime, Hammer has been trying to make the best of a bad situation. The auditor has put down a "large natural cost" to his business, he says. The act is gone but he'll still be paid the consequences in place with a psychology of all on Hammer and his employees.

"People are taking out mortgages, having babies. People who work here believe in the work we do. Some of my people are making professional salaries," he says. "I keep hoping our heads will prevail." ☐

## AGRICULTURE



## Farmworkers are

Suzanne Ouchard employed 26 domestic workers last year for bookkeeping, marketing, packing, distribution and orchard-management positions. These jobs wouldn't exist, Eastman says, without the temporary influx of outside help.

Department of Agriculture, which Eastman says has a better handle on the requirements and realities of seasonal work.

Whatever happens, it's unlikely that Eastman will face much in the way of competition for her services. Her job requires specialized knowledge — the kind of details that she picked up on the job rather than at Champlain College, where Eastman earned her business degree.

"There's a lot of red tape with the program," says Eastman. "You cannot get information by these governmental agencies, and it takes a certain somebody to carry the weight on their shoulders to do this job."

That said, she enjoys the work — especially when she sees the end result. She's seen farms grow and prosper with the influx of legal, seasonal help, and she's inspired by the dedication of workers who return year after year to Vermont.

"These workers are so happy to be here, and it provides a great standard of living for them in their home country," she says. "They can't wait to be on the list to be called back another year."

Eastman's clients describe her

as knowledgeable, confident and easy to understand. A few point out that, because she grew up in a dairy farming family, she has a commonsense understanding of how agricultural enterprises function.

"In a tough program," says Judy Adams, referring to all the hoop-jumping involved in finding reliable labor for Vermont farms, "she's been a real bright spot for us." ☐



Suzanne Ouchard

**YOU CANNOT GET INTIMIDATED BY THESE GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES, AND IT TAKES A CERTAIN SOMEBODY TO CARRY THE WEIGHT ON THEIR SHOULDER TO DO THIS JOB.**

ALYSON EASTMAN

Even if the H-2A visa isn't known today disappears under immigration reform, Eastman says farmers currently using the program shouldn't be adversely affected; the reform bill still has provisions for temporary, contracted labor. On the plus side, it could bring some big fixes, such as switching the bulk of oversight from the Department of Labor to the U.S.

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# The \$59 Million Question: Is Vermont Working Hard Enough to Give Other People's Money Back?

By Rick A. McEnugh TDn

**V**ermont State Treasurer Beth Pearce wasn't asking for notes or donations in a recent Saturday morning at the University Mall in South Burlington, she was looking to return money to the people who put her in office.

At an info booth near JCPenney, Pearce invited passing shoppers to test out a bank of computers to determine if the state of Vermont might be holding any unclaimed financial property that belonged to them.

A young man in a wired ear type had come into a search function and up came a hit. The man's former employer had turned his final paycheck over to the state's Unclaimed Property Office.

"Sweet!" the man exclaimed, shouting his arms upward, touchdown style. "I just made \$70!"

A few minutes later, a woman who worked at the database was less impressed to learn she was owed just \$8 and didn't bother filing a claim.

But another shopper that same day was pleasantly surprised to discover he had \$560 in "lost" stocks owing to him.

The state treasurer's office is currently in possession of more than \$59 million in unclaimed financial property owed to roughly 260,000 individuals and companies in Vermont. While only a fraction of that money ever gets back to its owners, Pearce is stepping up efforts — her missing-money road show, for one — to return people with their lost loot.

By all accounts, it's working. In fiscal year 2012, the Treasurer's Office returned more than \$4.2 million to 14,637 claimants — the largest number of claims paid out since the program's inception in 1958. Fiscal year 2013 is trending to be even better. Pearce estimates that by June 30, her office will have returned another \$8 million worth of unclaimed property from dormant bank accounts, stocks, tax refunds, overpaid hospital bills, sickly deposits, unclaimed wages and insurance proceeds.

Pearce has had a hand in some big wins since she was appointed in 2012. Her office recently announced it had reached an agreement with three insurance firms to return \$2.2 million in life insurance benefits to around 3,000 individuals.

"We've been working with other unclaimed property administrators across the country...engaging in multi-of-



fice insurance companies...and we found a number of cases where the insured had passed away and the beneficiary had not received those benefits," explains Pearce. In those cases, insurers couldn't locate beneficiaries on very old policies.

Working with industry groups such as the National Conference of Insurance Legislators, Pearce has focused on consumer legislation that would facilitate the process. She was recently elected president of the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators.

Closer to home, Pearce was a driving force behind a new state law that requires insurance companies to make "a good-faith effort" to find missing beneficiaries using a Social Security Administration database called "the Death Master File," a searchable government record of the deceased.

Currently, insurers can check that file but are not required to make that search.

As it stands, a beneficiary's claim

is what triggers a life insurance company to pay survivor benefits. Without a claim, the insurer has no affirmative responsibility to act.

Vermont's new law, which takes effect July 1, is the nation's most ambitious for finding claimants. "Insurance companies that sell both life and annuities had been using the Death Master File to search for deceased policyholders so they could stop making payments on the annuities side, but they hadn't been using the list to identify beneficiaries to pay benefits on the life insurance side of the business," explains Vermont Department of Financial Regulation Commissioner Susan Donaghy, whose office has jurisdiction over unfair insurance trade practices.

The new law empowers DFPR to go after insurance companies that engage in this practice, known as "systematic use of the Death Master File." The new law will require life and annuity companies to periodically search the Death Master File for deceased holders of life insurance policies, so that beneficiaries are found and paid sooner. Perhaps most importantly, if a beneficiary cannot be identified, it requires companies to send written and electronic proceeds to the state's unclaimed property fund, at which point the treasurer will attempt to locate the beneficiary.

"If the Treasurer's Office finds any evidence of non-compliance, it gets referred to us," Donaghy says. The new law should also bolster the state's position in reinsurance already under way.

In the annals of unclaimed property in Vermont, there have been some real big wins. More than 90 years ago, a Vermont bank turned over the contents of a safe deposit box containing rare photos, autographs and handwritten notes from luminaries such as Abraham Dink, Paul Klee, Cleveland Moore, Paul Gutzwiller, Pablo Picasso, Ilya Glinka and Johannes Brahms. The lot belonged to the late F.C. Schrag, who became president of Columbia Artists Management Inc. He was an agent for the Torrey Pines Stage of Brown.

Schrag's collection was thought to be worth roughly \$200,000. With the help of a town clerk, then state treasurer John Spaulding eventually found the beneficiary, a former Vermont firefighter.

How could such a valuable collection

go unclaimed? As Pease explains, "banks often merge with other banks over the years, so that's one way things can get lost."

How hard the Treasurer's Office works to reunite people and their things is a topic of great speculation. The Vermont list is sprinkled with well-known names, including the University of Vermont, Cabot Creamery, Ben & Jerry's, National Ice of Montpelier — even the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Does the presence of such high-profile claimants on the list suggest a less-than-scrupulous effort on the part of the state to profit there? What about the low-profile ones? How many of these might be easily located by, say, a savvy 18-year-old with an internet-connected device?

Pease's explanation: Some large companies with hundreds of separate small claims choose to file far from all just once a year.

As for lesser-known claimants, she says her office sends out roughly 11,000 of fiscal letters a year notifying people they have financial assets they apparently don't know about, staff use lists of state employees, teachers and retirees, as well as other government databases, to make money matches. Media campaigns and public awareness are also part of the outreach effort.

The average claim on Vermont's list is close to \$300 but many unclaimed accounts are worth less than \$10. Despite what Pease describes as a new "express filing system" which moves things a little faster for claims up to \$100, "people who are owed small amounts often don't bother."

Such explanations don't satisfy everyone. Here and across the country, critics have complained about the numerous cases states hold as unclaimed property accounts — estimated at \$41.7 billion. States put that cash-in-waiting to use; it doesn't just sit there in a drawer. Vermont uses a portion of unclaimed funds for college scholarships.

At least in theory, if anyone suddenly filed claims simultaneously it could have serious fiscal consequences. The value of Vermont's unclaimed property — \$99 million — is 4.5 percent of the state's \$1.9 billion general fund.

Wallace Nelson of Barre has a special interest in unclaimed property issues. The self-proclaimed activist, who for some

years has demonstrated an obsession with challenging the practices of government, holds that an aggressive return policy fundamentally goes against a state's financial interests. Nelson most recently reported that he has organized a group of 500 volunteers to locate individuals whose names are on the unclaimed property list to help them claim their money — essentially, it would appear, assisting the treasurer in her statutory mission.

It's not just a Vermont thing. In 2007, a federal judge in California stopped the state from selling unclaimed financial assets, ruling it had not made enough of an effort to return unclaimed property to its rightful owners. In his opinion, U.S. District Judge William B. Shubb

wrote, "If the purpose of the law is ... to reunite owners with lost or forgotten property, its ultimate goal should be to generate little or no revenue at all for the state."

Pease, recently returned from Washington, D.C., where she testified before the Uniform Law Commission, which is considering updates to the federal Uniform Unclaimed Property Act, she is pushing for changes that would, in effect, lessen remedies for states by getting money to claimants before it reverted to unclaimed property.

Pease seems to enjoy the challenge. Indeed, what politician — especially one who aspires to higher office — wouldn't love the chance to reunite people with money they might not know they were owed?

Between greeting shoppers at the U-Mail, Pease served notice on the higher-office path. "This is my passion — my life's work," she says of her job. "This is the only elective office I've ever going to be looking at." ☐

**Disclosure:** Rylie McNaughton worked as communications officer for the Vermont Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities & Health Care Administration, now called the Department of Financial Regulation, from 2007 to 2009.

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were certainly not at the center of the universe as the film would have it.

One thing I missed in this version of *Gasby* is the utter ridiculousness of the Buchanans and the way they destroy people so thoughtlessly. This was foregrounded in the 1974 version with Daisy's drunken murder of Myrtle (superbly played by Karen Black).

Barry Levin shows this subplot away, although he had more than enough on his plate. But he absolutely captured the wealthiness and yearning of *Gasby*. *Gasby* is as incredibly lovely, unfilled drama; this seemed to me to be the heart of the film, and very well executed. The sadness of his story is played in counterpoint with the empty (but beautiful) glitz and glamour.

Carole Zucker  
CHARLOTTE

# PIPELINE PROBLEM

Your recent article on the proposed trucked-gas pipeline through Addison County highlighted some key elements of the arguments, both for and against, but failed to place emphasis on some of the most disturbing realities of the project ("What the Frack? Middlebury



DAN WILSON, VTS

College at Odds Over Addison County Pipeline Project" May 15).

Despite continued negative feedback from those directly affected throughout Addison County, Vermont Gas Systems continues to erode questions. Tarnished at recent VGS open houses has continued almost entirely of vocal opponents to the project, cutting them to respond each town meeting-style forum. VGS representatives repeatedly fail to address the issues most important to route residents. Last year, Vermont passed a

statewide ban on fracking. We must not allow this blatant contradiction to undo through our votes, here at the table, and lock us in to decades of continued fossil-fuel contamination.

To accuse pipeline opponents of NIMBYism is false and evasive. No one's backyard, front yard, farm, or forest should be subject to clear-cutting and contamination. The strong and vocal opposition to this project is a sign of the inherent solidarity with other communities impacted by extraction. In your continued coverage of this issue, please include more voices from impacted communities, both from Addison County and from the back fields of Alberta, Canada, where VGS will be soot-soot, continue to stress the fact that natural gas is not clean-burning, and is a false solution to climate change, continue to highlight the growing and organized opposition to the fracked gas pipeline.

Martha Wetteman  
BURLINGTON

# SENSELESS STRATEGY

For "What the Frack? Middlebury College at Odds Over Addison County Pipeline Project" May 15) This article

emphasize that the bulk of the opposition to this pipeline is coming from land-owners whose properties lie in the path of the proposed route. As one of those "incidents of resistance," I can attest that, to me, this is more like someone who has been trampled by a dinosaur, so they launch a campaign to fight it with everything they've got.

It was a call to action when we discovered this pipeline was sited across our tiny farm — kind of like getting a really dismal diagnosis from the doctor. The thing is, we are not just fighting to keep this pipeline out of our backyard, we are fighting against the destruction that comes with "natural" gas drilling, transportation, and distribution everywhere on the planet.

No, we are not saying oil is better. We are saying it makes no sense at all to build more fossil-fuel infrastructure. And as someone who does not have unlimited funds and could really could use a drastic cut in my heating bills, I really resent the comment that "natural" gas could be a "game changer" for a corporation as hegemonic as International Paper.

Jana Palmer  
MONTPELIER

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# Green Mountain Opera Kicks Off With Young Artists, Masters, Mystery and Humor

By Amy Lilly

It's a cliché in Vermont to say the hills are alive with the sound of music. But this week, that is literally true — just not with Rodgers and Hammerstein.

The Green Mountain Opera Festival, which sponsors the state's only young artists' program for opera singers, launched its eighth season this week with an event geared toward the 12 young singers in its Rising Artists Program: a master class with Metropolitan Opera assistant chorus master Joseph Lorenz. The singers' master class performances are free and open to the public. Later in the three-week festival, vocal technique buffs can also watch for free in two other opera seminars: one for the young singing — er! — skills Steven Blum, who cofounded the New York Festival of Song and Anthony Wilkins, the artistic director and conductor of Washington D.C.'s Concert Opera; and music director of Pittsburgh Opera.

Though the GMOF features multiple events, including cabaret-style performances of *Bohème's* Albert Morio by the emerging artists and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* by professionals, new artistic director Anne Stange is particularly excited about the master classes series. And that makes sense. She directed the festival's Rising Artists Program for the past six years under former artistic director Susan Kulkh.

"[This] is my way up for the festival," Stange explains during a phone call from New York City. "I was really afraid to put the pitch out there, but I thought, if I'm going to do this, I'm going to go for my big guy."

Stange first worked with Blum when he founded the Wolf Trap Opera Company chorus master as a series of recitals that Blum conducted. Also a piano accompanist, Blum has given recitals with renowned opera stars including Renée Fleming and Renée Roney.

Stange has worked extensively with Australia-born conductor Anthony Wilkins at Minnesota Opera, where the former was music director for six years, and at Washington Concert Opera, where Blum has led up his current post as chorus master and assistant conductor at Wilkins's invitation. Wilkins will also conduct *Bohème's* Stange says he chose him because "I wanted someone really strong who goes Mozart's style" — particularly his Baroque style.



GMOF Artists' Center: David Gungura

Happily, Stange recently discovered, his premonition will come with his own Baroque trumpet, which tends to have smaller, colder brass heads and valves with brads wrapped in leather, creating a bright, focused sound.

"There are tiny little things," Stange admits. "Some people won't even know the difference, but the masters will go, 'Wow!'"

The new director has had to reconcile his and her high quality with GMOF's recently straitened circumstances. Its customary National Endowment for the Arts grant was one of two \$10,000 grants the festival did not receive this year. The summer's opera will be semi-staged rather than fully, though Stange promises they will be "highly theatrical" presentations that really put an emphasis on "telling the story." There will also be one production of the Rising Artists' opera other than this, and no Broadway piece in its past.

However, a new event has been added to the roster that promises to have wide appeal. This Friday, the public can hear a handful of the emerging artists sing in the intimate space of the *West Branch Gallery* in Stowe. Co-sponsored by *Wesleyan Opera House*, "Opera at the Gallery" will offer cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, art viewing and music from the season's two operas.

The idea behind the Stowe event is to reach new audiences, says Denise White, former board president of the *Green Mountain Cultural Center* in Whitefield.

— GMOF's parent nonprofit. Says White, "If you're actually hearing these singers, that can be a great experience to go see the opera."

This year's gala concert and choral pageant (sponsored at the UVM Racism Hall June 10), titled "Don Giovanni Behind Closed Doors," promises both fun and intrigue, Stange explains. "There's a lot of music around the character and his motives of *Don Giovanni*. What really happened to Donna Anna and Donna Elvira? We don't know" — other than that they are two of the Don's victims of seduction. The program will "explore the inner life of the young Giovanni" using the American *Baroque*, *Don Giovanni* and others. "There's at least one 'lie' and one 'weep' in the evening," Stange promises.

The director chose the season's operas in a nod to the festival's past and future. *Giovanni* is one of three operas on which Mozart collaborated with the great librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte. The GMOF has already produced the others, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. Stange considers *Don Giovanni* the trilogy as "a journey to past achievement. *Figaro's* comic 18th opera, by contrast, looks forward. "Bertracis" really influenced the landscape of contemporary opera," Stange says, and this year is the centenary of the composer's birth.

Baritone David Castillo, 35, is returning *Rising Artist* — and one of 675 singers who auditioned for the program this year — will sing *Ida* in *Albert Morio*. Speaking from Los Angeles,

Castillo calls GMOF's opera choices "smart," and the former work "one of the best operas for young singers to do. *Figaro* writes really well for the voice, and *Albert* is challenging and calls," but not heavy, he opines. The story involves violent Albert, crowned May King for his continued virginity, going off the deep end — as a result of his mischievous plotting.

As his first GMOF season last year, Castillo was still making his master's in vocal arts at the University of Southern California and was among the youngest participants. "That's what I loved about the program: Most had been doing the young artist thing for a while," he recalls. "They had instantly grown their voices. That really pushed me to do better. It was a really fantastic growth experience for me." And, he adds, "I didn't know how beautiful Vermont was."

**Ready, Steady:** As the new GMOF board president, he has been working hard on finding housing in the Mad River Valley for Castillo and the other singers, a nonprofit and professional — he calls it "biggest challenge, she estimates. While she's glad the new arts center among the 31 members of the *Green Mountain* (Albert will have 10) will further their short stays, for the singers she has needed to secure donated residences: ones that are properly owned.

The effort is certainly worthwhile, Stange says. "It's a huge thing to be able to support the next generation of opera singers. And they love it here." □

**Opera at the Gallery** Friday May 31, 8:30-9:30 p.m., at West Branch Gallery in Stowe. \$25. The full schedule of Green Mountain Opera Festival events, visit [greenmountainoperafestival.com](http://greenmountainoperafestival.com).

**Green Opera This Summer**  
The Green Company of middlebury opera can take performance out of *Don Giovanni's* Eugene Onegin this Friday May 28 concert only.

The *Green* will be at all events, perform a concert with an all-star and feature a spectacular of *Don Giovanni* on Monday July 1st as part of the Vermont Summer Music Festival visit [vermontsummersmusicfestival.com](http://vermontsummersmusicfestival.com)

Open with *Ida* in *Ida* singing the performance last Sunday, June 1st at the Vermont Summer Music Festival on Tuesday August 8, 8:30 p.m. only.

# With Two Daring Works, Actor David Schein Brings the Reagan-Era San Francisco Theater Scene to Vermont

BY PAMELA POLSTON

**B**urlesque actor **DAVID SCHEIN** brings sexual identity, cabaret and gender relationships on their eve as his one-man show *Out Come Aweh*, which opened at the OFF CENTER THEATRE THEATRE ARTS last weekend. In it, Schein, who comes to Vermont from a long and distinguished career in experimental/progressive/theater, explores nearly all the letters in the acronym LGBTQ. Unfortunately, it would give everything away to explain exactly how he does this, but suffice it to say, it's a belly performance to top-kick.



David Schein

**BUTCH DECIDES TO  
REMAKE HIS LIFE,  
TO TRANSFORM FROM  
"AN ASSHOLE  
CARPENTER" TO  
SOMETHING ELSE.**

**THEATER**

Perhaps I can say that the *schwein*/Butch begins the evening as a full-on, earnest construction worker in a earthly blue collar outfit, bad wig and facial hair. Butch imagines himself a sensitive enough guy but he's actually kind of a dick. Even if he does try to take care of a woman and child at home, and claims to do the cooking and cleaning to boot. When the ungrateful spouse up and dumps him, Butch wallows in the hurt, pain and self-pity of the dump. And then he gets mad. He acts out at work, making threatening gestures with a power tool. His boss assigns an anger management class.

Instead, Butch decides to remake his life, to transform from "an asshole carpenter" to... something else. He mediates. He trades in his Ford F100 truck for a Karmann Ghia. He loses the beard and "all that sheetrock shit" and gets a job at a record store. And he chooses a

retailer—which he carefully promises "not to" It is a pink flagging.

That signals a rebel hold close to the next person. Butch tries to or should we say tries "out."

Schein is an intense (per)former, throwing himself full-body into the multiple roles he has created in this piece.

At times he is very funny, particularly in body language, as body language, at other times he's almost uncomfortably confrontational. He begins Butch as a dude chafing against the constraints of dadness and the unforgivable female, but the character Schein has created is open to anything, almost too eager to change and learn and grow. Yet all the while, he's not just trying to find himself, he's trying to find love.

Schein brings his personal almost full-circle to us as we watch as he begins, with one really big difference that I won't reveal here. That conclusion can be interpreted in at least two ways. The cynical reading is that you can't escape who you are, so sooner or later you'll always be one, so earlier how many identities you try. The gentler interpretation might be that finding love—or yourself—should not require sacrificing who you are.

Schein is a man of many skills. He writes, composes, performs and teaches. The freeform "situation" on his website also lists managing nonprofits, fundraising for youth, strategic branding, and history projects and more. He co-founded

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**Outstanding Visiting Writer** Award-winning author and screenwriter Richard Russo is the author of seven novels and two short story collections. *Empire Falls* won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2002. His most recent book is the memoir *Shoreline*. Conversations with VCFA President Thomas Christopher Gentry. *Outgoing*, July 1 - 10 p.m., Main Hall

**Visiting Fiction Writer** John Warner is the author of four books, including the novel, *The Faint Yellow*, from Scho Press. He is an editor at McEwen's Literary. Readings and writes for Inside Higher Ed. *Outgoing*, July 1 - 10 p.m., College Hall 100 Chapel

**Visiting Creative Nonfiction Writer** Born in 1974, Deanna Roberts grew up in at least six countries. In the age of e-readers, he was happily converted of markets, along with two others. The three received a book contract and spent almost eight years on the book. He is the author of the New York Times bestselling memoir, *Life After Death* (2011). *Outgoing*, July 1 - 10 p.m., Main Hall

**Visiting Alumni Creative Nonfiction Writer** Thomas Christopher Gentry, MFA, is the author of *Devils for My Father*, *Empire of the Light*, part of the University of Nebraska Press American Lives series edited by Tobias Wolff. He is a former Pulitzer Prize nominee and Editor for the Second Magazine Award. *Outgoing*, July 1 - 10 p.m., Main Hall 100 Chapel

# In Middlebury, Edward Hopper's Vermont Paintings Reveal an Evolving Style

By Kevin J. Kelley

Edward Hopper's time in Vermont was bracketed by natural disasters: the flood of 1927 and the New England hurricane of 1938. In between, the artist who would later become famous for scenes of urban isolation drew and painted significant cultural buildings and rural landscapes. Viewing these works offers fresh insight into the psychology and evolving style of his overall body of work.

All of the 32 art watercolors and drawings Hopper (1892-1967) made in Vermont are gathered for the first time in a show at the **Middlebury College Museum of Art**, that runs through August 11. Several are on loan from Middlebury's Whitney Museum of American Art, a leading repository of Hopper's work.

The pieces are arranged chronologically, with single watercolors by Bonnie Tusher Chase, mother of Edward Hopper in Vermont, a book published last year by University Press of New England. Chase not only studied these pictures closely, she tracked many of them to the exact spots where Hopper had made his sketches. Like the artist and his wife, the investigator and her spouse drove the back roads of central Vermont, searching for inspiring scenes.

It was Hopper's practice, Chase writes, to sketch from the backseat of his parked car. The 6-foot-6-inch artist was able to stretch out more comfortably there. That position affected his perspective in works such as "Three Mills Bridge," a mid-1930s rendering of a span across the Winooski River that replaced a bridge destroyed in the 1937 flood. The height of the bridge's steel truss is exaggerated due to the artist's semi-recumbent position in the rear of his car, Chase notes.

Other observations of hers are less anecdotal and more enlightening: Hopper's Vermont oeuvre can be divided into two distinct parts, Chase explains. The artist, frequently focused pieces painted during his seasonal day trips into the state from an artists' colony in New Hampshire, and the landscapes composed during the summers of 1937 and '38, when Hopper and his wife, Josephine Vorhies Norton,



were agriculturists staying at Wigwag House in Ferrisburgh. South Royalton. Chase finds the evocative power to be timeless: "to live in their creation, while the watercolors and drawings made a decade later are much more expressive, she points out, reflect the self-confidence Hopper had acquired by then, as a critically acclaimed and financially successful artist.

The trees in water colors, such as "Rain on River" (1936) are depicted by means of feathery brushstrokes. Here, too, the painter makes effective use of negative space, allowing an unobscured, clear length of paper to represent — as properly enough — the White River.

However, is a central element of Hopper's vision. Some of his most famous city of New York street scenes, such as "Early Sunday Morning" or "desert of human figures, and even when people are present, as in what is probably Hopper's most famous painting, "Nightwatcher," the mood is mournful, with outdoor attention made to focus more on what must have been lost than on what is actually present.

The same effect is achieved, less dramatically, on most of the Vermont works. The only living creature to be seen in the Middlebury show is a cow in an untitled watercolor from 1937. And notes of melancholy infuse the landscape scenes that the taciturn Hopper painted to pass the long hours of his Vermont sojourn.

The landscapes are nevertheless alive with light and the forces of nature. The last piece in the show — "Windy Day" — shows an open expanse of bright blue river choppy with waves in yellow. In the trees bend and sway as the breeze. Viewers may feel a little when looking Chase's captions that this painting may have been composed on the very day that the great hurricane of 1938 was bearing down on Vermont.

The Hoppers were known to have left the state good-naturedly that September, she points out.

The most rewarding item in the show may be its half dozen chalk and pencil drawings. The subjects are precise: (See Vermont) barns, trees, distant mountains. But these sketches reveal the bones of Hopper's art. They give insight into how his hand translated onto paper what his eye had seen. They may also serve as hard evidence for the first of Hopper's drawings on offer this summer at the Whitney. ☐

**E** Edward Hopper's "Barners" paintings and drawings. Middlebury College Museum of Art. Through August 11. Info: 455-5227; museum.middlebury.edu.

Bonnie Tusher Chase writes on Hopper's Vermont art in her book *Edward Hopper in Vermont*, on June 3. 4 pm online. Whitney Center for the Arts, Concord, NH.

Hopper landscapes Carl Leneu gives an illustrated talk on his work on June 21, 4-5 pm, in the same location.



## David Schein arts20

the One Love AIDS/HIV Awareness Theater in Astoria, Oregon. He's created six solo shows, along with numerous plays and musicals. In his former stomping grounds of San Francisco, his 20-person *space* *Take a Play on the Stage* earned him three San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards, as well as three Hollywood Drama-Logue awards. *Our Gones Butch*, Schein explains, began as an improvisation he performed in Berkeley for a series called "Improvolution and the State of the Heart."

*Butch* has been performed by other theater groups around the country, including a recent stint at the Voodoo Lounge in New Orleans. Schein himself toured the work in the U.K. and Europe with Whispers Goldberg in a companion piece to her stage production "The Spoken Show" in the early 1980s.

In short, Schein has been an immensely productive self-employed artist. He sums up his work as "using the arts as a tool for transformation." Schein certainly plays with that theme in *Our Gones Butch*, but the piece with which he pairs it at the Off Center, playwright Jan Naber's "Note From Earth," embraces a much darker note.

Schein presents that 15-minute work — also a solo performance — following *Butch* and an intermission. He first performed it in 1985, directed by the author, in San Francisco, and has directed it himself elsewhere. "Note From Earth" is a sort of long poem, like a Shakespearean soliloquy, and Schein delivers it with a dramatic combustion

of moodiness, anger and resignation to unhappy destiny. It's one thing to read the piece — anyone can at the old chidean.com — but listening to it is challenging. Or, more to the point, hard to follow.

"Note From Earth" is set in a post-apocalyptic time. Earth is apparently totally nuked — Naber calls it "the wreckage of the twentieth century" — though whether by some cataclysm (burning and radioactivity are themes) or by a slower degradation (climate change) isn't specified; nature, each spore yet, eventually an arid wasteland of debris in the center of the ruins and strange, of little white lights overhead, underscores the grim reality of the ruined, darkened planet. Schein's delivery is not monotone but lively. He scribbles around the room (configured as theater in the round) like a trapped animal, even singing himself on the rubble pile, and talks monolog.

While a listener may not be entirely certain what's happened to Earth, or is happening in the moment with this character — he calls himself "the velvet voice beyond its end" — Naber's poetry is mesmerizing. And Schein's performance is an urgent, desperate force to the very bitter end. (C)

**O**ur Gones Butch written and performed by David Schein, and "Note From Earth" written by Jan Naber and performed by Schein Friday and Saturday May 21 and June 1 at 8 p.m. at the Off Center for the dramatic arts, Burlington 522. Please, audience, only into and no reservations. [offcenter.com](http://offcenter.com)

## LIVE culture

VERMONT ARTS NEWS + VIEWS

From the Seven Days arts blog this week

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Dear Greg,

The Straight Dope columns I find particularly interesting are the ones about secret societies: the Illuminati, the Bilderberg, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, the Masons, etc. I'm not sure whether I should burst in and join or continue to relegate them to the land of panned delusions. Can you give me the Straight Dope?

John Le Duke

**Y**ou're entering the big picture, John. Sure, I could riff on the Illuminati, Skull and Bones, or the League of Hyrox—or I could tell you about the more numerous secretive societies that hide in plain sight. These organizations are far more dangerous than a bunch of holding-coffee brothers sitting around naked in the woods plotting world domination. They work right out in the open, knowing the average person can't believe how deep the conspiracy is.

Let's start with the many secretive entities on the federal payroll, perhaps the most infamous being the National Security Agency. Every day NSA radio-captures intercept at least 17 billion emails, phone calls and other electronic communications, looking for... well, we don't know exactly because no one is telling. We also don't know the size of the NSA's budget, its share of the \$50 billion U.S. intelligence kitty is classified.



But evidently they get a good chunk in October as heavily lobbied top-secret NSA data center costing \$1.2 billion will go into operation in Utah. Financed by some 1,000 corporate donors at \$10 million in electricity per year, this mega installation has enough capacity to store hundreds of times the amount of data created in all human history. The idea is to protect us against terrorism and such. But who can say when some medieval bureaucrats may take it into their heads to investigate the Tea Party, the Socialist Workers, or you?

Closely linked to the NSA is the vast contraband and homeland security apparatus created after 9/11. A 2010 Washington Post investigation found 127

government organizations and 191 private companies were jelling away at various domestic security initiatives. Thirty-three buildings totaling 17 million square feet had been constructed in the D.C. area to house all these warlike bees. What can they up to? Even the people at the top of the intelligence lead chain don't really know.

Another secretive agency is the Federal Reserve, which controls U.S. banking and monetary policy. The Fed's deliberations are closed to the public, and its bylaws and codes of ethics are also secret. The idea is to prevent the intrusion of politics, but stuff happens. A recent General Accounting Office report noted that a New York Fed director

had bought Goldman Sachs stock while the firm was receiving \$129 billion via a bailout the Fed had engineered.

Plus, the most notorious secretive society of all—lobbyists. They don't work for the government; typically they're former government employees who put their insiders' contacts and knowledge at the service of whatever private interest is willing to pay their steep rates. How steep? For a crude idea, divide the estimated \$3.3 billion 2012 lobbying tab by the 12,600 known lobbyists, for an average of \$264,000 per lobbyist. Acquiring votes isn't cheap.

Who pays that kind of money? The National Rifle Association is \$3 million in a plea compared to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, number one at \$106 million. The rest of the top five single-issue noncongressional—the National Association of Realtors, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, General Electric, and the American Hospital Association. But don't. What businesses are these people are up to?

Still, we need to look at the even bigger picture. An embracing belief among progressives, dating to more recently than ever in the age of WikiLeaks, is that greater transparency—better world. This is arguably true of information. Your columnist and his hand-picked associates in the

ability to jettison open databases and download everything from federal homicide investigations by criminal code subsection to Chicago Transit Authority daily rail ridership by stop.

But transparency of decision-making is something else. In a TED talk from February, Harvard professor and political activist Larry Lessig observes that U.S. elections are a two-stage process: in stage one, the people with big bucks decide who the rest of us will get to vote for in stage two, namely the official election.

In the manner of all TED lectures, Lessig offers no useful guidance on how this process might be reformed, and at a fundamental level it can't be. We live in a world of infinite possibilities; the body politic is supposed to choose among two or three. Reducing the pile from the former state to the latter is inevitably accomplished behind closed doors by a jangling mass of lobbyists, operatives, moneyed interests, do-gooders, bureaucrats, politicians of varying intelligence, integrity and gain, and other interested parties.

I've participated in this show-up process myself. Occasionally afterward I go to the public meeting at which the matter is nominally decided, or more often ratified (I live in Chicago, DEQ, and I think. Most of the people in this room have to che-

**I** have something you need to get straight? Call Greg Adams at 606-261-1111 or email him at [greg@straightdope.com](mailto:greg@straightdope.com). Send Greg Adams at 100 Chicago Avenue, Suite 202, Northbrook, IL 60062-4001.



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## A Normal Life

It was a Saturday night, Mother's Day eve — not an occasion noted for riving at the bars and clubs. But business had been brisk enough anyway to all the activity surrounding the local college graduations — or, as we俗人 like to call it, matrons gone wild.

Toward the end of my shift at 4:45 on the morning, a couple approached me as I filled at a downtown taxi stand. They were quite a bit older than the other people still lingering on the streets so long past last call. The man was stocky with a shaved head, and had to be north of 40. The woman had a mop of grey hair and a dowdy dress, and could have been 65, or even older. They made an odd couple, particularly for the time and place.

After helping the woman into the back seat — she was clearly wobbly — the man sat down next to me. "Could you take us up to Georgetown?" he asked. "We're just beyond the Wilson line."

"Where, why not?" I replied. "The Interstate to Citicore Corners and north on 37?"

"Yep, that'd be the quickest." As we cleared the downtown area, he said, "Yeah, I took Mom out to celebrate Mother's Day. Kind of unconventional, but I worked for us. You had a good time, am I right about that, Mommy?"

The mother, who had been killing off on some daily heavy intake, instantly perked up. For my part, it was a relief to hear that the woman was his mother and not his girlfriend or wife. (Though "mommy" coming from the mouth of a middle-aged man was, let's not pretend.)

She replied, "Oh, yes, Phil — I had a

grand old time. I can't remember the last time I had a night out like this!"

Phil said, "That's great to hear. You deserved it."

On the interstate, Phil was voluble, talking mostly about his relocation to Vermont 15 years earlier. "Man, I had a good job in Ottawa, but got recruited to work at IBM. It was one of those opportunities you just can't refuse. We do like it down here, though I still miss Canada." He paused to rub his hairless scalp and

these things go, I did want to make it home tonight while the moon was still in the sky. When she was finished being sick, I fished out a few paper napkins from the glove compartment and passed them back to her.

"If we need to stop again, just ask," I made clear. "I promise you, it's not a problem."

"Thank you," she said. "I'm so sorry. You're very kind."

"Hey, could we stop at the Mobil at

## SUDDENLY THIS FARE MADE SENSE. SOMETHING ABOUT IT HAD FELT AWRY, AND NOW IT DIDN'T

check for a moment before adding, "I guess I feel it most during the lousy plays."

About a mile before the Milton exit, his mother arrived in the backseat. "Philly, we need to pull over," she said. "Could you ask the cab driver?"

For a minute, these are the magic words, and I immediately turned onto the shoulder, peeping at the hazard lights. I knew just how to handle these circumstances, unfortunately. I've had a lot of practice.

As Phil got out to help his mom, I requested as calmly as I could: "Please try to get her totally out of the cab, or at least if she could get her head out completely."

Phil was tender with his mother, gently holding her head and elbow while she leaned her head out the back door. Thankfully, it didn't take long, as far as

the exit here." Phil asked, "I want to buy some beer and maybe some cigars?"

"I'll be glad to stop, but it's way too late to purchase beer."

"Well, I've gotta get some beer. And cigars."

We pulled into the Mobil Phil went into the store on his little beer run. I got the engine. A big sigh — a mother's sigh — came from the backseat.

"We're both so sorry." Phil's mother shared with me. "Carol, my daughter-in-law, was in a serious motorcycle accident. It's turned my son's life upside down. She's had four surgeries so far. That's why I came down from Ottawa — to his with them and take care of my two grandkids. Those little darlings are just 8 and 11."

Suddenly this fare made sense. Something about it had felt awry, and now it didn't. The poor guy's life was

awry — two young kids, and I didn't even want to contemplate the extent of his wife's injuries and prognosis. He and his mom were just trying to cope any way they could.

Phil came back to the cab, sure heer "I should have listened to you," he acknowledged. "But at least I was able to score a couple of good cigars."

We passed Arrowhead Lake and, after a few turns, entered a nice development. As I neared up to the motel driveway, his mother said, "Oh, God — if I could just have a normal life. That's all I ask."

I pondered that sentiment, and decided what she really meant was, I wish I could have a life about pain and heartache. My heart went out to this mother and grandmother, but in my experience, each of us has a cross to bear — often more than one over the course of a lifetime. To me, this defines the human condition. A "normal life" was exactly what she was experiencing. To find joy, love and meaning in life, well, isn't that what it's all about?

The woman said, "Philly, make sure to give the man a good tip for all his troubles!"

Phil assured his mom he would, and he did. They got out of the cab and walked gloriously arm in arm, up the walkway toward the front door. From my perspective, behind the wheel of my taxi, they appeared to be saying 20 each other every step of the way. ☺

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# FINDING HER VOICE

Gretchen Parlato is redefining the role of vocals in jazz

BY DAN ROLLES

**I**f you read up on jazz singer Gretchen Parlato, you'll inevitably encounter some variation of the phrase, "She uses her voice like an instrument." That may be the ultimate compliment in a genre that historically has placed a premium on virtuosity over fluff, and has tended to view vocals more as ornamentation than serious music-making. For example, consider *East of West*, the prestigious Tishman Music Institute of Jazz Performance at the University of Southern California's 15 years to admit its first vocalist. And that vocalist was Gretchen Parlato.

Increasingly, savvy jazz fans have become excited with the 27-year-old Parlato, who will perform on Saturday, June 8, as part of this year's *Barclays Discover Jazz Festival*. Venue patrons will then have the chance to hear for themselves why she annually ranks at or near the top of critics' polls of the world's 50 best jazz vocalists. For five years running, Parlato was named one of *Downbeat* magazine's "rising star" female vocalists, before being named the No. 2 Best Female Vocalist in 2012. That's the same year she was named the Best Female Vocalist by the Jazz Journalists Association. But these lofty accolades only tell part of Parlato's story.

Renowned producer Quincy Jones has said that jazz is equal parts soul and science. That notion gives a long way toward describing Gretchen Parlato's appeal. Some singers arrive with virtuosic technique, profound displays that seem to defy the very limits of the human voice. Others petition more directly to our emotional sensibilities, thoughtfully tugging our heartstrings with a sly turn of phrase or a groan across. Rare is the singer who can do both. And when they come around, we tend to refer to them familiarly: Billie, Ella, Frank.

"Gretchen" may not be there yet, but she gives us every reason to believe that her day will come, and soon. Combining the shiftny and elegance of a classic jazz diva with the curiosity and steam of the genre's forward-thinking pioneers, Parlato represents a bold evolution of the jazz singer. No, she is not the next Billie Holiday or Sarah Vaughan — and she would be the flintiest to say so. She is Gretchen Parlato. And she is the face of a new generation of vocalists who are challenging our perceptions of how the human voice can be reinvented — literally and figuratively — in jazz music.





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## FINDING HER VOICE

stunning, unlikely interpretation of the Miles Davis and Bill Evans staple "Blue in Green" from *The Last and the First*.

"The original version of those songs are already the definitive version. So I don't want to imitate anything. There's no point," says Parlate of her approach to deconstructing established, sometimes iconic compositions. "But a beautiful song is a beautiful song," she continues. "So you break it down and then add your own story. You want to honor the beauty of the original but do something new."

Parlate's version of that kind of blue center piece is an expressive, jazzy digression that is almost unrecognizable from the original. However, Parlate evokes the Prince of Darkness' sonorous, cerebral melancholy with breathy, yearning tones that kind of sound like a trumpet, even as she's staging the lyrics written by jazz vocalist and composer Meredith Monk.

"It's the power of nature," explains Jackson of Parlate's sensitive, but "Someone like John Coltrane or even Miles Davis, who could transcend a melody in a subtle way. It's minimalist, but it's out there, you're not looking up over the head with just singing. Gretchen has that sublime power, where it's like being knocked over with a muted trumpet."

Indeed, subtlety has long been a key to Parlate's approach. Even as controversy also is a soft spoken and thoughtful. In concert, she often favors a sleek, understated black dress that renders her almost indistinguishable from her bandmates, rather than call attention to herself as a front person.

In his review of a 2009 concert for the Boston Globe, jazz critic Steve Greenlee writes that Parlate presented herself as a "fully integrated member of her band," who "appears to see herself less as a singer than as a musician whose instrument happens to be her voice." He adds of her band's delivery that Parlate "seely means some lyrics, stretches

out syllables for two and three bars, and adds wordless vocals that are more like soft wails than wails." He liked her voice as a cello. And a muted trumpet. And a trombone.

"She doesn't see the band as a supporting character," ruminates Greenlee, speaking by phone from Portland, Maine, where he is now managing editor of the *Portland Press Herald* and Maine's *Portland Telegram*. "She's part of the band, and she incorporates her voice as if it were another instrument. She interacts with her voice like piano would with a bass. In some ways, she's more of an improviser than most jazz vocalists are."

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GRETCHEN PARLATO

Globe Larry Appelbaum agrees that Parlate is unique among modern jazz vocalists, calling her sound "normally identifiable" in a recent email. Appelbaum is a vocal contributor to several publications, including *JazzTimes*. He also hosts a jazz radio program in Washington, DC, and serves as the senior music reference specialist in the music division of the Library of Congress. Appelbaum says Parlate's technical skill, combined with her profound maturity, set her apart not merely as a vocalist but as a musician.

"She doesn't have a large voice, but her ear and intention allow her to sing in tune without resorting to studio production tricks," writes Appelbaum. "I think that's also why so many musicians call her for recording dates. She has the discipline and precision control of a studio singer who can still deliver intimate and phrasing. Her sound, approach and suitability help make her a musician, not just a singer."

"The defining characteristic of a jazz singer is someone who doesn't approach a song the same way every time," adds Greenlee. "The essence of jazz is improvisation. She approaches every time she sings."

Parlate seems to have little else for



definitions of her music or whether what she does fits neatly into classifications of jazz.

"To me, it's not even anything to argue about," she says. "Jazz is a style of music that was the popular music of the day at a certain time and now has grown and transformed. We're moving with it and it's moving with us. There is room for someone who wants to carry that tradition and honor that. And there is room for other people to push it in a new direction."

VPR's Braden Jackson agrees.

"You could put her under a microscope and pick apart every little detail," he says. "But it's really about what you do with the material. It's about creativity. That's what keeps pushing jazz forward."

Parlane's next project is a live album, her first. Due out this summer, it was recorded over a series of New York City shows in December 2012 and features two different bands. One includes Taylor Eigsti, Burniss Earl Travis and Randeck Scott; the other has Egsti, Alex Hampton and Mark Guiliana. All are longtime collabors with Parlane.

She says that record is primarily composed of songs from her previous albums, but that the live versions will be markedly different from the studio cuts, capturing a chemistry that only happens in concert.

"Those wings open up and there is a lot of space around them," Parlane

explains. "They change in the moment when we play them live."

That's an exciting prospect for fans, particularly considering that, according to Sutton, Parlane's budding live persona is perhaps her most impressive trait. And it was the last part of her musical road to fully bloom, Sutton adds — the final discovery of a complex and challenging sound.

"Because Gretchen has such a pure instrumental quality, translating that into a performance person took her a minute," explains Sutton. "To watch her, in every aspect, say she has to do this her own way, be her own person, being in confidence that are most dear to her — that was a lesson to me to tell other students. When you really take those risks, it takes a while for people to understand it and from it is a way an audience can absorb."

As her reputation grows, more and more audiences are doing just that: absorbing the brilliance of Gretchen Parlane.

"The only thing I can do is to continue to create and offer my own music, and for it to come from a genuine place," Parlane says. "I don't know where to define that. But as long as it's honest, who cares what you call it?"

**G**retchen Parlane performs at the 2014 Summer Festival, June 4th at the Skirack in Burlington. Tickets are \$25. Open to all.

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# The New Mindfulness

How a tech-savvy monk is taking meditation to the masses

BY KATHERINE FRAGG

**S**cratched out on an exam table in the anatomy wing of Fletcher Allen Health Care, 26-year-old Anna King flashes when her physician, Dr. James Boyd, inserts a long, thin needle filled with a fentanyl injection in the sole of her foot.

That's when Scrupa Pennil chimes in, his voice low and steady. The 34-year-old Zen Buddhist monk sits perfectly upright by King's bedside, his hands clasped between his knees, staring intently at her.

"Give us, give us," Pennil coaches the patient. "If there's discomfort, let it come and let go. If there's pain, let it come and let it go."

By nature, King is chipper and cheerful, the kind of person who makes up the core of most friendships almost immediately, but now she is silent and focused. Since years ago, she suffered a brain injury after a severe hemorrhagic stroke in Washington. "I don't even remember it, but my body does," she says ruefully.

King's July 1985 accident caused severe brain swelling, as well as a rupture in her middle cerebral artery. Today, evidence of the injury lingers on in her slightly haling speech and the jerky movements of her limbs. As part of her ongoing treatment, she sees Boyd, who specializes in movement disorders and has taken some therapy, every three months. The brain therapies are a way of dealing with the muscle spasticity that is one side effect of her brain injury.

But the operations are painful, and King has been experimenting with another sort of therapy to help her weather the brain: mindfulness training. She began attending Burlington's Shambhala Meditation Center about three years ago, on the suggestion of a friend. Then, last summer, she met Pennil.

On this particular morning, Pennil has joined King as a friend. It's trying to help the young woman cope with pain in the best way he knows how — through mindfulness. Pennil describes his technique as "letting go" of one's struggle with sensory experience while opening oneself up to a more honest, focused interpretation of the world. Born as Buddhism demands a tight form, Pennil says, "it requires one simultaneously to relax."

If that sounds like an impossible balance to achieve, fear not. Pennil is on a mission to extend the benefits of



David Huxford

mindfulness well beyond the bedside. Two years ago he founded the Center for Mindful Learning (CML), which took up residence in the Burlington Friends Meeting House this spring. Pennil is especially committed to bringing mindfulness training to elementary and secondary students, and has tapped local schools to pilot an innovative

mindfulness software program designed to help learners focus, explore and welcome new challenges.

Does the ancient art of Zen Buddhist meditation clash with the modern trappings of technology? Not according to Pennil. He's

a monk with a laptop, content on taking mindfulness out of the monastery and into the mainstream.

"The modern telecommunications role of our lives and the monastic, experiential role of our lives fit together without any friction," Pennil says. How does he address those pervasive concerns about technology making us anything but mindful — that is, discernible, authentic and disconnected?

"We designed it to be what it is," Pennil counters. "And we can design it to be something better."

When King's treatment is over, she sits up and swings her legs over the edge of the exam table. She's smiling, and looks relieved. Pennil marks her on the "aha-log" that comes from accepting the status of discomfort and pain that can obstruct during meditation.

By coincidence, the post-hump into the new Young Vermont state hospital in meditation circles, a few minutes later in the hospital corridor. "You look like you got high," Young woman King, remembering on her leg.

"I did," she jokes. "On chronic pain."

**S**crupu Pennil isn't the monk's given name. "My parents gave me a very nice name," he says. That Scrupa, the new name came later, at a Japanese monastery on the other side of the world.

Pennil grew up on Dorset Street in South Burlington at a time when the neighborhood was still largely undeveloped, pocketed with forests and ponds. He was a sensitive child — not overly so, he admits, as he remembers once looking out a window at the Worcester Central School and musing on "all the children in the world." But he enjoyed school until he hit adolescence, when, he remembers, he was confused by the way "people who just a few years before had been generally kind and looked kindly in their actions."

Pennil succeeded in his classes, but he wasn't happy — and didn't stay long at Williams College, where he headed after graduation. He'd eventually return and earn a degree in computer science, but a year in, he left school for Japan, seeking a place where he would be allowed to "ask questions full time."

Pennil was 18. "I went from being a child to being an adult on mountains," he recalls. "I was not looking for a religion. In fact, I was looking to get out of a blind, faith-based view of things, which I think so many of us are stuck on, even if we say we're not religious. There are a lot of assumptions that we make, points that we

Education



believe in, without questioning. I wanted to have a way to question, to deeply wonder; and then to be expected to find answers."

And as he studied, learned and traveled — to Japan, to Israel, to a Hindu ashram in South India, to the practice of mindfulness, Forall found what he was seeking. He says a way of being in the world that brought peace and enlightenment. When he returned to Vermont, he set his sights on introducing the same techniques to students in the hopes of making school a better environment than the one he'd encountered as a teenager.

Initially he visited classrooms to teach the meditative technique in person. But Forall soon realized that he was limited by time and resources, and that when he left the classroom, the mindfulness practices left with him.

So he decided to go digital. Funded by grants, donations and support from an educational organization called the 1640 Foundation, CML has spent the past two years, and \$180,000, developing a guided mindfulness program that teaches three skills: focus, exploration and welcoming challenges. It's not magic, Forall says. "These are skills — and, just like any other skill, they require practice. They can be learned."

Pilot programs at a handful of Vermont schools are bearing out his claim. Mary Woodruff is the principal of Jerile Memorial Elementary School. Forall started leading mindfulness "guidances" at Woodruff calls them, in person there last spring. He took these experiences, funneled them into CML's computer program, and returned to the school with software last fall.

Every class at Jerile uses the software for daily five-minute mindfulness exercises. A seventh-chooser goes guests students when they log in to the program. "Welcome to mindfulness practice," the message "Mindfulness helps us feel happy and successful" she coaches the students to breath in, straighten up, breath out, settle down.

Then Forall's voice comes over the system. He introduces a lesson, and often launches into an anecdote about his own school days. Sometimes the lessons have to do with relaxing, or with overcoming challenges. Students are coached to sit up straight, to reduce tension and take deep breaths.

"What they are in after teaching are the skills to be a good learner," Woodruff says. That's precisely Forall's aim: he believes that adults and educators can often tell students to focus, but don't give them opportunities to practice.

At the small Jerile school, teachers are making a difference. One parent wrote to Woodruff with the story of her 5-year-old son's struggle to learn to ride a bike. The boy was growing frustrated by his mistakes — until he stopped, took

a great big breath and let it out slowly. When his mother asked him what he was doing, he responded "I'm doing mindfulness."

Another Jerile kindergarten turned to an older brother who was practicing up new techniques at home and reported that week's "mindfulness manager" from school. "You need to take time to make things better."

Disciplinary issues have dropped off precipitously at the school — from 70 office referrals over a six-month period in the 2000 school year to just 13 over that same period in 2002.

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SORYU FORALL

Woodruff admits that teachers were initially a little tentative about the undertaking. The reaction ran along the lines of "We're going to do what?" But it was the teachers who unanimously decided that year to continue with the mindfulness pilot project.

Jerile is paying \$50 per classroom annually to use CML's software. Is it worth it? "More than," Woodruff says.

The benefits of mindfulness don't just play out in classrooms. Science is increasingly proving that meditation has significant effects on the brain and body. A study published last November in the journal *Neuroscience* and *Neuroscience* found that people with coronary heart disease saw a 48 percent reduction in their overall risk of heart attack, stroke and death if they took a class on meditation rather than a health-education course.

Meanwhile, researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, have compared MRI scans of the brains of meditators and nonmeditators — and found differences in their very structure.

Long-time meditators, it appears, have more folds in the cerebral cortex, which may be associated with faster information processing.

A few weeks after Forall reached King through her Boston experience, he's back in Boulder, Africa — but this time, he's the patient. Forall is participating in a research study, overseen by psychiatrist Magdalena Nayke, that investigates the effects of meditation on chronic pain management. His knees peek out from inside an enormous MRI machine, while on the other side of a glass pane, researchers watch images of his knee flexion on a bank of computer screens.

In addition to studying the structural, cognitive and emotional activity of participants' brains, the study is testing pain management, using a specialized \$50,000 machine that applies heat to a subject's calf. "This is the business end," says researcher and University of Vermont senior Emily Eck, holding up a small black cube the size of a ring box, which is attached by a complicated array of wires to a rolling cart.

The researchers induce pain in the participants both to test tolerance and to watch how their brains react under the stimulus. One trick to coping with pain, Forall says, is to not avoid it. Instead, one welcomes the pain, focuses on it and mentally says "this is that," he says, as what he tried to help King achieve during her Boston experience. Kneecap follows from allowing sensory phenomena to come and go without resistance, the monk advises.

It's too soon to say much about the results of the study. The UVM researchers are still accumulating long-term meditators — with at least 1000 hours under their belts — to participate in the brain scans. But early signs suggest that, yes, there are differences between the brains of meditators and nonmeditators when it comes to managing chronic pain.

After about an hour and a half in the MRI scanner, Forall decamps to the hospital cafeteria. He's happy to participate in the study, he says, and excited about what could be one more reason for winning converts to the practice of mindfulness. But, as far as Forall is concerned, he doesn't need a brain scan to know that meditation can make a difference in daily life.

Right now, sitting in this cafe looking at that table, is more satisfying than any experience I had for years of my life, for decades of my life," Forall says. He doesn't describe himself as a religious person, but the look on his face is almost beatific. With mindfulness, he says, "We gradually learn to be more aware, more open. And the brilliance within us, and the brilliance within as — that becomes more available to us." ☐

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SEVEN DAYS

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# Conscientious Coders

Vermonters build community-minded apps at the National Day of Civic Hacking

BY GINGER W. DEAR

**T**his weekend, even the White House will encourage American citizens to start hacking. But don't go changing the password to your email or Facebook accounts. The government isn't reducing the level of hacking that would harm it; it's promoting "civic hacking," a new kind of collaboration using their own to produce technology to improve communities.

"Civic hacking" explains Amy Kinsler, founder of the Vermont Business for Social Responsibility Marketplace. "It's a way for people to get involved in government and their communities using technology."

The idea is simple: Citizens work to partner with their local, state and federal governments, as well as with private sector organizations, to solve problems. More than 3000 people — some professionals, some techy dabblers, some hackers right — are expected to participate throughout the country in the first ever National Day of Civic Hacking this weekend.

Kinsler and Bradley Holt, cofounder and web developer at Planet Labs, a Vermont-based communications firm, are collaborating with Vermont music promoter Big Heavy World to bring this national event to Burlington's Maykeno Cafe on June 1 and 2.

It's what will participants actually do all day — actually into whole days? Working in teams of individuals, they'll build prototypes for new apps, such as an app that can be used to promote and promote local music. They'll also likely experience still apps that have been successful in other cities, and brainstorm new uses for open data from municipal governments.

The Burlington event also marks the launch of Code for America, a new brand of Code for America. Similar to Tech for America, the national organization connects coders, designers, organizations and local governments in an ongoing effort



to build and deploy community-minded apps.

Seven Days spoke with Holt about this weekend's hackathon and what it means to hack for the common good.

**SEVEN DAYS:** What are a few examples of civic-hacking apps and websites that exist

elsewhere and might also work in Vermont?

**BRADLEY HOLT:** One popular open source music app that could be used here is Adopt a. It started as a music app called Adopt a Hybrid, and has been used in both Boston and Amsterdam, among

other cities. Adopt a Hybrid lets individuals claim responsibility for taking out a fire hydrant after it rains. The same application has been adapted as Adopt a Steward in Chicago and Adopt a Sitka in Honolulu for people to learn about tourism, alert areas and report any problems.

Another example is Tuxton. This is a

service that opens civic dialogue through text messaging. A local government, agency or department can design a survey with its own phone number. The phone number gets printed on posters or signage around town with a simple starting survey question to which individuals can respond via text message. The codes deal can then respond to follow-up questions, turning each response into a conversation.

**SD:** Do participants need to be technologically savvy in order to contribute to the hackathon?

**EH:** No. We want to encourage people of all skills and skill levels to participate. We will have workshops for those who want to learn new skills. Teams composed of members with a range of skill levels are encouraged. The idea is for all to learn from each other. We'll also have demos for those who are just curious about what we're doing.

I should also note that this is a non-competitive hackathon. Our focus is on inclusivity and collaboration. We want people to work together to improve their communities through technology.

**SD:** What about code for it? What are you hoping to achieve with that new group?

The first-year goal of Code for RTV is to facilitate sustainable collaboration on-site software and open-data projects between coders, designers and non-governmental organizations. Code for RTV will develop a pipeline of organizations to work of civic software, as well as a pipeline of coders and designers able to develop, deploy and maintain civic software and infrastructure. Code for RTV aims to have a broad impact, as many statewide organizations are based in the Burlington area.

The initial campaign of Code for RTV will involve building a set of web apps for Big Heavy World, a volunteer-staffed nonprofit dedicated to preserving and promoting Vermont music. These apps will be part of a rotating catalog; they would also be a prototype prototyping process and community building in a Vermont-based, musician and music fans. Initial prototypes will be developed during the National Day of Civic Hacking. After that event, the campaign will move forward with a goal of developing, deploying and maintaining apps for Big Heavy World based on these prototypes.

**SD:** The national event is only two days long, which doesn't leave much time for an entire app or website to be developed. What is the primary goal of Vermont's civic hacking event?

**EH:** Our primary goal is to build community and a culture of civic hacking. As for tangible outcomes, we're encouraging teams to focus on building prototypes rather than full apps. There are many challenges facing our communities and we don't expect to solve every problem during a two-day event. Instead, we want participants to walk away with inspiration and a vision for how they can help improve their communities.

We encourage participants to stay involved in Code for RTV in the months and years following the hackathon. We hope that the civic hacking during the National Day of Civic Hacking will continue as we'll use the future through Code for RTV.

**F**irst ever Day of Civic Hacking, Saturday, June 1 and Sunday, June 2, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Maykeno Cafe in Burlington. [codeforamerica.org/burlington](http://codeforamerica.org/burlington)

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BRADLEY HOLT

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**JUNE 2013**

- 6/1 SAT **Burlington Discover Jazz Festival (BDJF)** @ Bobby McFerric "spiritgoddess" @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/1 SAT **BDJF: Edmar Custodio Quartet** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/1 SAT **Gallery Exhibit: Clark Russell, "Wood Nocturne"** (Saturdays, now through 6/21) @ Amy E. Tenant Gallery
- 6/1 SAT **Yang Bao Piano Recital** @ North Hero Community Hall, North Hero
- 6/1 SAT **Burlington Civic Symphony** @ Filley Long Music Center at SMC, Goldboro
- 6/2 SUN **BDJF: Bradford Marsalis Quartet** @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/5 MON **BDJF: Dave Douglas Quartet** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/4 TUE **BDJF: The Salena People's Sound Collective** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/5 WED **BDJF: The Fringe** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/5 WED **BDJF: Organs** @ Nectar
- 6/6 THU **BDJF: Organs** @ Nectar
- 6/6 THU **BDJF: Bayou Tent featuring The Seal Pickets and Iron Neville's Campstaphunk** @ Waterford Park Tent
- 6/6 THU **BDJF: Helen Sung Quartet** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/6 THU **BDJF: Vans Is Vans** @ Signal Kitchen
- 6/7 FRI **BDJF: Etienne Elies** @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/7 FRI **BDJF: Disoriented Cruise** @ Lake Champlain Ferry at King Street Dock
- 6/7 FRI **BDJF: Lee Fields and The Expressions** @ Signal Kitchen
- 6/7 FRI **Clark Russell Gallery Exhibit Reception featuring music by NELSON** @ Amy E. Tenant Gallery
- 6/8 SAT **BDJF: World Tent featuring Burlington Levy and Robbie Spice and The All Space Band** @ Waterford Park Tent
- 6/8 SAT **BDJF: Gretchen Parlato** (8 & 10 pm) @ FlynnSpace
- 6/8 SAT **Preservation Burlington Homes Tour** @ Various Burlington locations
- 6/9 SUN **BDJF: Ponce Sanchez and His Latin Jazz Band featuring Ray Vega** @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/9 SUN **BDJF: Greg Tardy Quartet** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/11 TUE **"Directing Boba Bitt"** (5:11-10) @ FlynnSpace
- 6/11 FRI **"Don Giovanni"** @ UVM Recital Hall
- 6/15 SUN **The Daytroters Featuring Duo @ The Cathedral Church of St. Paul**
- 6/15 TUE **FREE FILM: "Love Free or Die"** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/22 THU **"Stand Up, Sit Down, & Laugh"** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/21 FRI **Johnny Lemoscello** @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/22 SAT **Burlington Wine & Food Festival** (12 & 3 pm) @ Waterford Park
- 6/24 MON **Melissa Etheridge** @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/27 THU **Jazzmine featuring Ariana** @ FlynnSpace
- 6/27 THU **Vermont Symphony Orchestra** 30 Bank Summer Festival Tour @ Mountain Top Inn and Resort, Chittenden
- 6/29 SAT **"SPANK! The Fifty Shades Parody"** @ Flynn MainStage
- 6/29 SAT **Vermont Symphony Orchestra** 30 Bank Summer Festival Tour @ The Station Inn, Randolph
- 6/29 SAT **DMX** @ Shelton Hotel Conference Center
- 6/30 SUN **Rick and the Rickless** @ Grand Isle Lake House, Grand Isle

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# Tales of the Dead and the Living

Book reviews: *A North Country Life: Tales of Woodsmen, Waters, and Wildlife and I Was 'nking of Beauty* by Sydney Lea

BY MARGOT HARRISON

**W**hen you review bookstores in Vermont, you receive a lot of volumes with "northern," "north country," "life," and "seasons" in their titles. You read a lot of essay collections in which authors in their sixties or eighth decades contemplate the shifting natural world as seasons with human change, aging and loss.

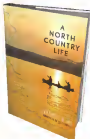
Sometimes, to be honest, you wish you could receive books about anything other than the west and west of the Black River, where

classy, correct college grads are writing and scraping for jobs. Sometimes you grow a touch impatient with these retired writers who have time for contemplation and the luxury of dismissing out of hand the fast-paced, always connected world where you live and work.

I point this picture only to indicate the reluctance with which I approached Sydney Lea's essay collection published in January, *A North Country Life*. That the book arose out of that situation, and then more, is a small indication of his living power—as a writer, as a novelist and as a wit. Lea is Vermont's current poet laureate, and his prose is as artful and as direct as his verse. While his book's elegiac mood is a familiar one ("More and more, everything about me seems out of time," he writes in the "Preface"), this poet would make better stories you haven't heard before.

For one thing, most of them take place not in Vermont but in a wild part of Maine to which Lea writes, "I've come back and back . . . for more than sixty years" ("The Snowbird: you don't and can't leave and I shudder in his multiple camps there"). Many of the 20 essays I did not appear in publications ranging from the *Georgia Review* to *Gray's Sporting Journal*.

Lea lives on his mission the country of lives, seasons and stories of the old times of his favorite corner of the North Country—his friends and mentors to him, now long dead. These are people whose



**LEA MAY DRAW STRENGTH FROM DAILY OBSERVATION OF NATURE, BUT HE KNOWS IT TOO WELL TO ROMANTICIZE IT.**

daily physical labor "would tell most modern humans," Lea writes, people for whom "the interesting of nature and their lives 'has simply a given'."

Don't expect robust folklorism or awe-struck passages of reproductive labor. Lea's mode of bringing the past to life might best be described as a recreation. His "Preface" begins with something akin to a magical incantation. As he repeats a single regional idiom—"beeskin and"—it's a pot suspended above the cook fire on a hard-won branch—the term creates a world of doing life. "I go on working at a huge return of 'what's past shall be,'" Lea writes,

"What old profession of a beloved stream, one that has hidden and burns me?"

If this passage calls on language itself to revive the past, other essays call on the dead. In "Waters and Places," Lea speaks directly to his long-gone mentor, Constance. *My Arthur* is on that essay, he addresses his father, who died at 38. In "Living With the Stones," Lea simply transcribes the remembrances of a then living friend, 55-year-old woodsman Rod Runeson. In "New Look," he takes a more risky, semi-fictional approach and produces an unlikely, unmentioned story about a 79-year-old woman watching her son-in-law's husband fall prey to the bottle.

Is it wrong to take such artistic liberties with the truth? That's a concern Lea returns to repeatedly. "I guess I do have some nerves, but I can't help it," he writes at the end of "New Look"—his proudest of his own thinking onto his own. "You tell yourself things, and you hope they make sense. What else can you do?"

The notion that Lea needs these stories for sustenance—and hopes that readers might do it with—may not be true, even if the previously mentioned book's title of urgency (inspired by seasonal passages from Lewis' *Darkhawk*), the essays return repeatedly to their author and the "years" he seeks for his current melancholy.

Stories are one can, nature another. Lea may draw strength from daily observation of nature, but he knows it too well to romanticize it. "This solitude in the natural world, but certainly not because it with us the very awareness of the universe, nature's realm of grief (gray and waste in so many regards)," he writes in "Darkhawk, May." Several of the essays detail the poet's isolated ways of engaging with nature, which have evolved (if a little) and built on grass, duck and deer. Lea doesn't talk profuse thanks accounts to the nonhuman, or even explain his terminology. That's hard to read them without feeling a new respect for the challenges and, yes, the ethics of traditional sportsmanship.

A retired college professor, Lea is highly aware of how his colleagues might judge these passages, and that self-consciousness occasionally fosters a hesitating tone. In "Old-Blood Hunting," for instance, he imagines how educated Vermonters might disdain the solitary folk he was in while hunting pheasant in Kansas. But those conservative Kansans, he speculates, might be more likely to like the things that most liberals mostly just talk about: help their needy neighbors, walk the sick ones, care for children in need.

If a reader grows bored or weary, it's only slightly quibbling, and one the book doesn't need. The people the places, even the hunting dogs go off to in *A North Country Life* call to us on their diamond sharp spec of city, defying special pleading and stereotypes. Whether or not we can experience the North Country in Lea and his mentors did—and most of us can't, for all kinds of reasons—we will not soon forget them.

**A** pull brought on a second look from Lea. If I Was Thinking of Beauty, his third book, is out this week, science or even a small, thick, single story. As we learned from *A North Country Life*, Lea never works beauty—and he uses a great deal—without also seeing the blood stain, the snow from a predator's kill. His genre doesn't censor out sentimentalism or pain.

Two poems bookending the collection confront the question of whether art, as it is, can emphasize on beauty, can be trusted to tell the truth. As Keats famously pointed, is truth beauty and vice versa? It's hard to put a question "aside" leaving nothing to oppression and exploitation, as a professor contends in the title poem?

This unnamed professor, like most of the academics Lea mentions in *A North Country Life*, is a bit of a straw man. (A notable exception in the late part and 50. Michael's college professor John English,



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## Tales of the Dead and the Living #373



SOME OF THESE POEMS HOLD RHYMES OR THE GHOSTS OF RHYMES, REMINDING THE READER THAT POETIC ARTIFICE CAN CREATE ILLUSIONS OF HARMONY.

which. Les memorializes in the essay "Stonehenge." In this poem, he gives us the 15th-century cottages and barns that were built from discarded oil barrels as counter-proofs that beauty can and will pop up anywhere, whether as given, with our political allegiance.

Of course, such a view of beauty entails expanding the definition of art well beyond the purview of "high" culture. In the poem "Art," Les suggests that grinding a mud vase, smothering and sealing it deserves to be called just that—and that, as he grows older, such humble, functional art moves him more and more.

It Was Thinking of Beauty alongside with A North Country Life, though each has its distinct focus. Les's poem "At Vase" is a distillation of the passage titled "Daybook, July," and some of these poems are surely examples of vignettes returning to the themes of aging, melancholy and loss. In both books, Les dwells on the sadness of the empty house he missed

if he children from two marriages, all new grown, and some with children of their own. Considering the ambivalence with which many artists view the notions of family life, Les's unguardedly expressed affection for his wife, kids and grandkids is refreshing—even when he acknowledges, as he does in "Father's Bless," that growing children are yet another marker of mortality.

Some of these poems hold rhymes or the ghosts of rhymes, reminding the reader that poetic artifice can create illusions of harmony. And sometimes, Les acknowledges, artistic choices do fail. In "Wind, Death," the poet recalls watching a bird die crash through the woods, doctored by the "cunning cold." He could tell the unmade story, perhaps even recast it as part of some evening's narrative of natural order, but doing so wouldn't change her grief. For Les, instead, he recedes his own loss, mercy: "I'd always imagined words' restorative power." Les writes, "but

I'd witnessed beings who couldn't pass on // what had happened or how // Words wouldn't help them. To see that so starkly stung."

In another poem, "Two Starlings for the Cakes," Les once again fights with his artistic tendency to find meaning and order in a natural phenomenon—grackles flying together in August, like a flock seen above the "summer earth."

Then he gives us to that meaning, asking, again and again, "A North Country Life? A man the staves, the birds and 'night' that, however false or fragile, give people the strength to endure."

Men and women and birds get lost and live and die. Still they create you, or whatever each they may have they have some dim faith they'll always survive, as strange and untrue a thing to believe as any in nature. But that's no matter.

We humans stay alert, we believe, holding our sights, or if it's no matter that the layers would keep right on opening and offering all we'll go on opening.

The poem is so the story isn't a re-run of beauty may make us a straight shot of truth. But of faithfully translating a dance to make sense of the world that is far older than, say, capitalism, or the mass media—or that is, Les suggests, a survival device. Reading these essays and poems, it's impossible not to keep returning to Les's words in "New Look." "You'll be passed things, and you hope they make sense. What else can you do?"

We all have our own sense-making rituals and strategies, of course. But to expand our experience of tales to include Les's—and those of his beloved old miners—is to enrich ourselves immensely. Back on the days of his bookkeeping near Lake, the woodsman Earl Brown remembers, "Pills was more important and had to be." His words about change are well worth quoting too: "You don't get anything much without losing something too and lots of times when you guess you lost something you come up with something you didn't have before."

### FATHER'S BLUES (FROM I WAS THINKING OF BEAUTY)

Back in my chair, I tried to show what members

of the Stanford Marston Quartet were making their way

through changes. "The Klaxon of Evening" is the melody that they've're, however that the fall across the grass

of fathers, part death, took root in the part of my and where dreams might have bled. They're disappeared, though only yesterday they all were here

their laughter, two sons, rhythm of my love. It took my forever not to photograph what I knew I won't be able to remember

of the laugh the picture—or at least I won't do it day-eyed. Still by now going down, all five of them laugh as they say twice a moment's pace together

One night the youngest child's best friend asked to go

It's selfish, having children. If so, one

is more than is hardly a sign of selfishness

but instead of our national bid to extend ourselves

That makes up blouses of faint narcissism, I guess

The friends like more than a child here, yet truth

—however partial—And underneath her answer

As our children grow away they absorb the youth's

rejection of us here. We watch them laugh, bloom, and when at last they look and wonder

we're wounded—the way I am by this blue tree—

that our lives are more durable than their own

The years will wait them, they change as a wound

Like the President's twelve guests, they'll march and fade

in a day. They all were here just yesterday. ☺

**I**n *A North Country Life: Tales of the Mountains, Rivers, and Wildlife by Les Murray* (Penguin/Publishing, 2021) pages \$24.95.

*How, Being of Beauty*, by Les Murray (New York: Penguin, 2021) \$20.00.

*Spelling Les* and *Les Murray* are Sunday, May 23, 7pm, at David Bonnell's School of Leadership, Sunday, June 1, 2pm, at David's Public Library, and Sunday, June 23, 2pm, at Queen's College. Large groupings of Les Murray's poetry are available for free on-line, see [spellingles.com](http://spellingles.com).



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# Off Track

Theater review: *The Performer*

BY DIAN PARKER



Art Finkel and Anthony Iorio

**N**ew York City accidents are no strangers to the lives of the homeless, many of whom sleep on subway stairs and platforms and in the doorways of apartment buildings. The people are generally homeless, but it's not a pretty scene.

Just such a scene is what Marshfield playwright Tom Marbury explores in his new work, *The Performer*, which opened last week at Clarkland College's *Harbors Theater*.

His main characters are a handful of homeless folks surviving underground on a subway platform. There's an inept guitar player, Jack (Marcus Beebe), and his feckless girlfriend, Cadya (Lizama Patterson), a 40-year-old boy, Jacko (Adam Black), a lonely bag lady, Mireen (Renee Black), and a prostitute, Sheila (Jill Profile), who "works" for

a living. While these five individuals try to eke out enough money for food, anonymous subway commuters come and go around them.

Two other actors portray the passengers (Oliv Allen, Wade Broderick, Beth Call, Susan Candan, Deana Florio, Diana Kaganova, Jerrie Nash, Oliver Scotch, Walter Seyler and Beth Sturt). They enter and exit through the sides between the caregivers, go up and down the stairs to the stage, and frequently change their outfits to depict numerous homeless commuters. They never speak to anyone or make any noise. Instead, they read their newspapers or books, smoke cigars, eat, drink, sleep or simply stare at the empty platform, waiting for their train. Occasionally they glance over at the homeless, but do not interact. Two of the latter play music for money, but rarely receive any from the commuters.

While this hapless quarter sits on a

bench at center stage, between two off-stage subway tracks, the boarding commuters enter and exit between two pillars representing the doors of the subway car. One side of the stage is for the outbound train, the other for the incoming. While some enter, others spill out of the train, creating the illusion of a subway station replete with the sound of trains stopping and starting. Joe Jolie's set is simple and elegant.

Eventually a new man enters the train and, without asking, joins the street musicians, using a large tin can that he carries in his guitar case. This is Cooper (Nicholas Hicke), a theater director. He wears a black fedora and trench coat, and has a white beard and mustache.

The mysterious Cooper shows up at unexpected moments throughout the play, each time he somehow manages to get the subway passengers to drop money into Jack's guitar case. The first time, they



make \$50, the second, \$100 — all because Cooper appears to be someone there with his charming and nice stick. When he chants it's hard to say. Sometimes it is Shakespeare, sometimes Tennessee Williams. One speech is some kind of Buddhist philosophy about nondiscrimination. Most of the time it was hard to make out what exactly Cooper was saying, so Hecht's voice did not project well, and many of his occasions were too long-winded to engage the audience.

Cooper gives all the money he collects to the needy group, so they can eat and drink or buy stockings — whatever their hearts desire. It is not made clear why he does this, or, even more disturbingly, how he gets strangers to unload their cash. The character is meant to be charismatic and powerful, employing tactics such as playing to manipulate others in the program, playwright-director Hecht writes. "When Cooper's onstage, anything can happen, he is a creature of improvisation and spontaneity. He is unpredictable, mysterious and eccentric."

Unfortunately, the Cooper we see is none of these things, and that is one of the major weaknesses of the play. Hecht is weighed down with so many lines that he struggles to remember what comes next. His movements are slow and jerky, as is his blocking, like voices barely coming past the production's tech.

One of Cooper's tricks is to "pretend" in one scene, he pretends to stab young Jacks, using a trick knife and stage blood — but forgets to have the blood ready. Another time, during his soliloquy about the importance of being no drama, Cooper contorts each of the homeless characters to show something they value onto the train tracks. Moments later the backstage director Cooper himself — she fantasizes about being his girlfriend. But Cooper's presence and silence were simply not compelling enough to make any of this believable.

Cooper constantly tells us how mysterious, during and spontaneous he is, how being a performer is a way to effect change. But his performance is pedestrian and lifeless, and so are his lines. In the program, as well as in the script, Hecht declares, "If we accept our fate, we resign ourselves to being merely players. If we decide to work our destiny, we become 'performers'." So far, to equal the homeless, while destiny equals Cooper. The former actually ascends through life without purpose, while Cooper creates his destiny by affecting his environment and the people in it. Problem is, you can't create change with meagerly humble speeches and weak acting.

Thank goodness for those flawless costumes. They were exquisite, mysterious and eccentric. It was fun to see what they were wearing, what new grip they would have and what they would do with it. As a result, watching their campaigns and groups was entertaining, and they kept the play's pace from slipping into sluggishness. Hecht's blocking of their movements was a plus.

Still, The Performer is overthought and could use serious editing. Perhaps a different director could have given stronger shape to Hecht's material. Under his direction, the homeless live improbably clean hair and clothes (except for the last wearing a dirty wig). The street musician wears a gold wedding ring. The bag lady pushes around a shopping cart with brand-new bags, her spots in clothes have but a silver hole. And, with his ragged, dirty couch seat and red plastic, vase dangling from a horizontal, Cooper looks poorer than the homeless.

Not addressing these simple and obvious details was negligent on the part of the director and the costume designer, Bruce Ragnerson, and the coauthors to the play's lack of veracity.

It would have been nice, moreover, to learn more about the main characters. There falls an one-dimensional clothes — including the gum-chewing, stiletto-wearing Jacks. What are their backstories? The only character about whom we learn anything at all is Maureen in the second half of the play. She has given up her kids to the state and feels bad about it, wrote said, but just couldn't handle being a mother.

Two more details. Maureen The Performer's talent to capture us acting authentically lies, the homeless smoke cigarettes while subway passengers text on their cell phones — but the New York subway doesn't permit smoking in the cell phones era. And when a transit authority guard, Dave (Jon Lee), shows up because the homeless are making too much noise, he fails to notice fake blood on the lady's white T-shirt that looks all too real.

In The Performer, it is only the costumes, eating and going, who really get us upstaged. ☹

**THE PERFORMER** written and directed by Tom Hecht. Play produced by the Valley Community Arts. May 30, June 2, 7 & 9 at the New England Theatre Festival, Concord, N.H. 802-223-5555 or [www.valleycommunityarts.org](http://www.valleycommunityarts.org). Box office: 802-365-3655.

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Exploring Québec's wine country with the experts

**S**tranding in the sun outside Veggieville de l'Ouzouille in Dransham, Québec, Caroline DiCosta looked a little nervous when she was handed a mammal tub and a bottle of sparkling wine. With one swift move, she ran the weapon along the bottle's scoured edge until its top cracked off and the wine frothed on the grass. DiCosta burst out laughing, and a dinner companion elicited as her fellow bloggers snapped the tubs open.

Diane and I were part of a group of 25 or so wine writers and bloggers from around the Northeast taking a sweet weekend to sample the riches of Quebec's

wine, between and riders. Soon our glasses were being topped "with the best of Chablis. The waiter opened — our third — and we were around us with trays of pungent local cheeses and warm, velvety Lou Truitt Red goat. It was nearly past noon, and this was already our second one of the day.

This was my fifth year at Taste Camp, an annual sensory tour of a region's food and drink, some of it "road-grazed" by wineries, such as OryzaCellar (it means "gold-rocker"). Many winery owners welcome "taste" from wine bloggers, and Taste Camp—conceived by wine editor Lena Thompson in 2009—combines

opportunities for bloggers to mingle with a weekend-long tour that hits a hot or not Kashmir wine-making region each year.

Thompson, who edits the award-winning *Mag* New York City Post, convened Taste Group while attending a national wine bloggers' conference in California. "The parts I enjoyed most, and the parts that several of the bloggers I respect enjoyed most, seemed to be the locally focused things like winery walks and tastings," Thompson said. "And it wasn't just the walks and the tastings the wineries. It was the discussions among the group on the bus and before [and] after the walk."

Her idea was to entice some of those writers and bloggers to Long Island, where they'd explore the wins and foibles of his home turf. The following year, Taste Camp was held in the Finger Lakes, then in the Niagara region of Ontario, and then in northern Virginia's wine country.

Thompson got his first reminding that Quebec would make a good destination at a Taste Camp dinner a few years ago, when Julian Blanchard, a Quebec City food blogger, passed him a sample of fire cider. "I was blown away. It was a category I was completely unfamiliar with," Thompson re-

UNLIKE THE ALL-EXPENSES-PAID JUNKETS THAT SOME NINE BLOGGERS ARE INVITED TO, TASTE CAMP IS STRUCTURED AS A PAY-YOUR-WAY WEEKEND OF CAMARADERIE.

called. When Remy Charvet, another drinks writer and friend, suggested they bring the event to Quebec, it was a done deal.

Unlike the all-expenses-paid junkies that some wine bloggers are inclined to, Taste Camp is structured as a pay your way weekend of camaraderie. First, our crew, later on a train, was hospitably fed from vineyard to vineyard in a frenzy of exploration. But the informality didn't stop wine nerds such as @Pipalicious from riling out the end conversation.

"We have the chance to be covered by a lot of facebooks and journalists," said Maryse Blanchard, director of marketing for Pôpôchard. "But, to be really transparent with you, we are in the first steps to reduce bloggers and, yes, we do take it really seriously. It's a community on impact, not because of this credibility."

There were serious chops in this group. On the ground, organizer Chavstein is an esteemed Quaker City food and wine writer, and his colleagues — Maryland and writer David Sautman — sport an impressive list of publications and contacts. They were hosting wine bloggers from Ontario, Nova Scotia, Vermont and Boston.

1999-2000: 2000-2001: 2001-2002: 2002-2003: 2003-2004: 2004-2005: 2005-2006: 2006-2007: 2007-2008: 2008-2009: 2009-2010: 2010-2011: 2011-2012: 2012-2013: 2013-2014: 2014-2015: 2015-2016: 2016-2017: 2017-2018: 2018-2019: 2019-2020: 2020-2021: 2021-2022: 2022-2023: 2023-2024: 2024-2025: 2025-2026: 2026-2027: 2027-2028: 2028-2029: 2029-2030: 2030-2031: 2031-2032: 2032-2033: 2033-2034: 2034-2035: 2035-2036: 2036-2037: 2037-2038: 2038-2039: 2039-2040: 2040-2041: 2041-2042: 2042-2043: 2043-2044: 2044-2045: 2045-2046: 2046-2047: 2047-2048: 2048-2049: 2049-2050: 2050-2051: 2051-2052: 2052-2053: 2053-2054: 2054-2055: 2055-2056: 2056-2057: 2057-2058: 2058-2059: 2059-2060: 2060-2061: 2061-2062: 2062-2063: 2063-2064: 2064-2065: 2065-2066: 2066-2067: 2067-2068: 2068-2069: 2069-2070: 2070-2071: 2071-2072: 2072-2073: 2073-2074: 2074-2075: 2075-2076: 2076-2077: 2077-2078: 2078-2079: 2079-2080: 2080-2081: 2081-2082: 2082-2083: 2083-2084: 2084-2085: 2085-2086: 2086-2087: 2087-2088: 2088-2089: 2089-2090: 2090-2091: 2091-2092: 2092-2093: 2093-2094: 2094-2095: 2095-2096: 2096-2097: 2097-2098: 2098-2099: 2099-2100: 2100-2101: 2101-2102: 2102-2103: 2103-2104: 2104-2105: 2105-2106: 2106-2107: 2107-2108: 2108-2109: 2109-2110: 2110-2111: 2111-2112: 2112-2113: 2113-2114: 2114-2115: 2115-2116: 2116-2117: 2117-2118: 2118-2119: 2119-2120: 2120-2121: 2121-2122: 2122-2123: 2123-2124: 2124-2125: 2125-2126: 2126-2127: 2127-2128: 2128-2129: 2129-2130: 2130-2131: 2131-2132: 2132-2133: 2133-2134: 2134-2135: 2135-2136: 2136-2137: 2137-2138: 2138-2139: 2139-2140: 2140-2141: 2141-2142: 2142-2143: 2143-2144: 2144-2145: 2145-2146: 2146-2147: 2147-2148: 2148-2149: 2149-2150: 2150-2151: 2151-2152: 2152-2153: 2153-2154: 2154-2155: 2155-2156: 2156-2157: 2157-2158: 2158-2159: 2159-2160: 2160-2161: 2161-2162: 2162-2163: 2163-2164: 2164-2165: 2165-2166: 2166-2167: 2167-2168: 2168-2169: 2169-2170: 2170-2171: 2171-2172: 2172-2173: 2173-2174: 2174-2175: 2175-2176: 2176-2177: 2177-2178: 2178-2179: 2179-2180: 2180-2181: 2181-2182: 2182-2183: 2183-2184: 2184-2185: 2185-2186: 2186-2187: 2187-2188: 2188-2189: 2189-2190: 2190-2191: 2191-2192: 2192-2193: 2193-2194: 2194-2195: 2195-2196: 2196-2197: 2197-2198: 2198-2199: 2199-2200: 2200-2201: 2201-2202: 2202-2203: 2203-2204: 2204-2205: 2205-2206: 2206-2207: 2207-2208: 2208-2209: 2209-2210: 2210-2211: 2211-2212: 2212-2213: 2213-2214: 2214-2215: 2215-2216: 2216-2217: 2217-2218: 2218-2219: 2219-2220: 2220-2221: 2221-2222: 2222-2223: 2223-2224: 2224-2225: 2225-2226: 2226-2227: 2227-2228: 2228-2229: 2229-2230: 2230-2231: 2231-2232: 2232-2233: 2233-2234: 2234-2235: 2235-2236: 2236-2237: 2237-2238: 2238-2239: 2239-2240: 2240-2241: 2241-2242: 2242-2243: 2243-2244: 2244-2245: 2245-2246: 2246-2247: 2247-2248: 2248-2249: 2249-2250: 2250-2251: 2251-2252: 2252-2253: 2253-2254: 2254-2255: 2255-2256: 2256-2257: 2257-2258: 2258-2259: 2259-2260: 2260-2261: 2261-2262: 2262-2263: 2263-2264: 2264-2265: 2265-2266: 2266-2267: 2267-2268: 2268-2269: 2269-2270: 2270-2271: 2271-2272: 2272-2273: 2273-2274: 2274-2275: 2275-2276: 2276-2277: 2277-2278: 2278-2279: 2279-2280: 2280-2281: 2281-2282: 2282-2283: 2283-2284: 2284-2285: 2285-2286: 2286-2287: 2287-2288: 2288-2289: 2289-2290: 2290-2291: 2291-2292: 2292-2293: 2293-2294: 2294-2295: 2295-2296: 2296-2297: 2297-2298: 2298-2299: 2299-2300: 2300-2301: 2301-2302: 2302-2303: 2303-2304: 2304-2305: 2305-2306: 2306-2307: 2307-2308: 2308-2309: 2309-2310: 2310-2311: 2311-2312: 2312-2313: 2313-2314: 2314-2315: 2315-2316: 2316-2317: 2317-2318: 2318-2319: 2319-2320: 2320-2321: 2321-2322: 2322-2323: 2323-2324: 2324-2325: 2325-2326: 2326-2327: 2327-2328: 2328-2329: 2329-2330: 2330-2331: 2331-2332: 2332-2333: 2333-2334: 2334-2335: 2335-2336: 2336-2337: 2337-2338: 2338-2339: 2339-2340: 2340-2341: 2341-2342: 2342-2343: 2343-2344: 2344-2345: 2345-2346: 2346-2347: 2347-2348: 2348-2349: 2349-2350: 2350-2351: 2351-2352: 2352-2353: 2353-2354: 2354-2355: 2355-2356: 2356-2357: 2357-2358: 2358-2359: 2359-2360: 2360-2361: 2361-2362: 2362-2363: 2363-2364: 2364-2365: 2365-2366: 2366-2367: 2367-2368: 2368-2369: 2369-2370: 2370-2371: 23



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# SIDEdishes

BY CORIN HIRSH &amp; ALICE LEVITT

## Life's a Beach

INTERNATIONAL CATERING  
OPENS ON BURLINGTON'S  
NORTH BEACH

Where can you get gyro, red Thai curry, Philly cheesesteaks and Jenaro's Italian pizza? At the beach, of course. Memorial Day brought the opening of a seasonal stand called the **BEACH HOUSE** on Burlington's North Beach. Owners **AMIN JOYBRAND** and **SAMI PADANEH** have been managing partners at **JENARO'S RESTAURANTS** since April, but such a road crew a Church Street food cart

The snack truck will soon offer 40 to 50 items on an adjacent patio and serve some of the Jenaro's kitchen menu, including a new Thai curry dish that Joybrand learned from the chef at his former Church Street neighbor, Bangkok Bazaar. Even so, gyzaus will be well fed with salads, freshly fried falafel and pizza brought down from Jenaro's.

Once the summer is over, the hits will keep on coming. Joybrand and Padaneh's deal with Burlington's Department of Parks and Recreation includes running

few longtime signature dishes — such as grilled, sesame-enamelled salmon — with new flavors.

The prep behind the bar will be mixing up specialty cocktails blended with local spirits to go with a host of new apps such as kimchi-topped Korean toast and grilled slices of beef flavored with lemongrass. Hot and cold soups, steamed, egg rolls, rice and coconut curry soups, and a few other Asian-inflected entrees round out the menu. "None of the stir-fries is over \$10," Brand says.

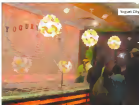
Like most restaurant owners, he ran into a few delays on the road to reopening, and he emphasizes that Pacific Rim's second debut is a

packed menu consisting of mixed vegetables and vegan Turkish appetizers. There's sweet stuff, too. Don't miss Jenaro's paradise baklava and bazaar Turkish delight.

Spending of events, Williston's Maple Tree Place finally has a replacement to feed the crowd that once flocked to Ben & Jerry's after the recent **WASHOON** event. Jenaro opened Vermont's first **YOGURT** cafe franchise last week. At the grand opening celebration on Saturday, June 1, all 15 self-serve flavors and 50 toppings will be free, says manager **NEWMAN** 516 and Zha are already looking to expand to Burlington, La. adds, and have been scouting locations.



Amin Joybrand, Left, and Sami Padaneh



Pacific Rim

Jenaro's has opened **AMIN** **BEACH** since 2006, while Padaneh took over **WICKED** **HOGWARTS** four years ago.

Favorite dishes from all three businesses are on the menu at the Beach House. Manager **AMIN** **APRIL**, a 6-foot-7-inch University of Vermont basketball forward, began training his 5-foot-6 college sibling in last week to run the stand throughout the summer.

"They'll prepare Hibernian National hot dogs in two sizes, including 10 specialty dogs made for local enterprises such as UVM basketball coach John Berkey. Jenaro says he hopes to get local printers for hand-cut French fries, most produce will come from the **SAN MARCIN** family farms, he says.

the snack bar at nearby Ledy Park Arena, which will serve an all-day stand version of the Beach House menu all year.

— A. L.

## Asian Phoenix

ASIAN IRM REOPENS  
THIS WEEK

After a two-year absence from the Burlington food scene, the staff of Pacific Rim Asian Cafe is shopping salmon and lemongrass again to a new spot on Lower Church Street.

On Tuesday, owner **BOB** **SHAW** opened the doors of the renovated Pacific Rim after a light renovation of the former Sky Burger space at 161 Church Street. He added a "Japanese" full bar and a new menu that welcomes together a

soft one, at least for now. "We thought, all right, what the hell. We'll just open and then work out the kinks later," he says.

Another new addition: outdoor seating, which Pacific Rim lacks during its 10-year run on St. Paul Street. Diners can soak up the sun at beach and dinner every day except Monday.

— G. B.

## Crumbs

LEFTOVER FOOD NEWS

**ANTHONY GRANT** **GRANT** began his work opening at Burlington's 163 Pearl Street on Monday, May 20. The mother-and-son team of **NADIA** **GRANT** and **ALF** **GRANT** has filled the very, where-mallied space with

Less than two months after opening, the owners of Burlington's **ANNA** **BAR** have changed its name as a result of a trademark objection from a similarly named restaurant in New York City. **ANNA** — which means "grape" in Italian — will settle all be known as **VIN** **BAR** & **SHOP**.

"It was disappointing to have to change the name, so we had put a great deal into it before we had opened," writes co-owner **ALICE** **CLARY** in an email. **VIN** — located steps away on College Street from **QUINCY'S** **RESTAURANT**, the decade-old Italian eatery **CLARY** runs with his wife, **ALICE** — is a combination wine bar, casual store and education center.

— A. L. C. H.

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LARRY O'NEILL FOR THE PRESS

person for home-dried shrooms into an already-lit bowl. Chatterbox food from the chefs from Les Chefs de la Cuisine de Montpelier started dishing out paper bowls of food such as omelet-and-egg dark wings, which we washed down with even more beer.

The visit to Montpelier anchored our Saturday. Its splendor was balanced by the sobering reality of its wastewater, Charles-Henri de Cossiguere, who explains in French how he protects his water from Albee's hands means by con-

son order. Back in the early 1980s, Christian Barthomeuf wanted to make wine at his home a few miles north of the Vermont border. But, with the climate decidedly not on his side, he decided instead to business two things that rural Quebec had going for it—fizzing weather and apples.

At his place in Frelighsburg, called Clos Sanguet, the growing but still roughish Barthomeuf pointed us samples of his cabec de glace—rich, insouciant wines tasting of bismarck, wax and honey. His wife, Louise Dupuis, explained their process

We sampled some of La Face's signature Negero on cider which made for a riot in the mouth when upped after the cubes of creamy La Brea d'Elizabeth cheese set out for us.

Though the weekend's wining and dining were epic, the spiritual focus of Taste Camp was the traditional RND dinner on Saturday night, where the campers kept their own company to pop open barrels from their respective regions and share, sip and debate.

The very long table made Montpelier SAT foodies were lined with dozens of bottles, from Niagara sparkling wine to a marinated of Cobscook from Ontario. Every one was eager to share, and I was peeved that I hadn't remembered to bring a bottle from home. Sipping around in long a bottle from home. Sipping around in long a bottle from home. Sipping around in long a bottle from home.

Despite the gluttony, half the group didn't lead to bed that evening. Instead, they milled around town to Seneca, one of Montpelier's craft breweries.

"That was great," one of the literary campers said the next day. "It was the perfect afterthought might have been a mistake." ☺

## TWO LONG TABLES HELD A THREE-COURSE MEAL WITH WINE PAIRINGS — A SMOKED-TROUT ROULADE ALONGSIDE A TART ROSÉ, A SAMPLER PLATE OF GRILLED SAUSAGE, SILKY PORK TERRINE AND CURRIED DUCK WITH AN EARTHY CORPAILLEUR RED.

strong their roots with sand in November, the 20th anniversary of moving it in April.

In nearby Frelighsburg, Michael Marler of Vignoble Les Perennes, whose wines sell out quickly upon release, also plays chess with the winter cold. Winemaking in Quebec, he told us, "is a blend between how am I going to get enough sugar? [from the vines] versus how am I going to go through the winter?"

Despite the climate's challenges, Marler grows the grapes organically and relies only on natural yeasts. "There's a lot of things I've learned with biodynamics farming that fit in with my life," he said, standing in his chilly vineyard. Around him, we sipped and spit splashes of his planetary, spicy Franciac and barrel samples of Les Chefs d'œuvre.

A climate that fosters each demonstration also breeds ingenuity — such as the bismarck that goes raw in the fire-over

"The apples freeze, they unfreeze," she told us. The art of making an cider involves knowing when to pick the fruit before it falls and disappears into knee-deep snow. "Then they are lost," Dupuis said with a sigh.

In Frelighsburg, a few miles from the New York border, we visited another cidery called La Face Cachée de la Foisie ("The Hidden Side of the Apple"). Cider maker François Paulus, a former film producer, explained how he bought the orchard at age 28 and began making his ciders in the basement of the estate's house.

As Paulus is as polished as Sanguet, his honey, an eating room beside it is a rugged artwork and creative bottle displays. Some of its apple wines — such as Northern Syzy — are named after lines much as grapes are, "so that the energy of the plant gets connected into the fruit," and his phone Rochester, La Face's director of sales

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# Spring Chickens

Inside the backyard poultry craze

BY KAHN YN FI App

I was bumping down a dirt road in Springfield, worried I'd made a wrong turn when I came upon what was clearly an destination: the monthly poultry swap and meeting of the Vermont Bird Poultryer's Club. This was judging with tail feathers — birds arranged in truck beds, in cages under tents, in so many other ways. I knew I'd found the right place when I spotted a woman examining the chickens in a T-shirt that read, "Don't ruffle my feathers."

I put my car in park and started my resolve. I didn't care how close the chicks were, how delighted the ducklings. I was not coming home with any birds today.

My husband, Colin, had surprised me with a homemade chicken soup for Christmas, and in the following months I started seeing long poultry in cornish, Dorset's Game or Bantam Chickens took up residence on my kitchen table, along side the kitchen cutlery. I pressed for permission.

And I discovered the bird farmers. I knew that a group hosted monthly poultry swaps starting in early spring, but in the meantime, I found myself a regular chatter at a housing Northside and casual consumer of some 200 backyard food enthusiasts.

There was cyber talk of chicken breeds, of consumer producers, of rare breeds and new hybrids. Talking was partially lively conversation, a woman waving her hands over a neighbor's dog, which she estimated had killed at least 22 of her own chickens. "What is enough enough?" she wrote. "I like dogs. Have them myself. I don't want to shoot the dog. Would either shoot the owner?"

Most people recommended trying the official channels, such as town animal control officers or nearby humane shelters. And they guessed action. "Just make the dog disappear and say nothing as desire if asked."

It wasn't until earlier this month, when I visited the Vermont Ornithological Society for the May poultry swap, that I could not sit there in the food frenzy. About a dozen tables had lined up their really — some pulling birds from the backs of their trucks — on the side of the dirt road. I arrived at 10:00 a.m. for the Sunday morning swap, just a half hour after the official start time, but couldn't wait. I'd already missed the biggest action of the day. Most buyers and sellers are making deals hours before the swap officially opens.



**Raising chickens, especially egg-laying hens, is one relatively easy way for homeowners to tap into the locavore and slow-food movements.**

Immediately, the ducklings at John Peters' stand captured my attention. Peters put in a 50-year career as the manager of a tire store and embarked on raising poultry in his retirement. Last year he raised 1500 golden cornish pullets, and he supplies several regional pet stores with rabbits and guinea pigs.

Peters arrived from about an hour away in his pickup truck to attend the swap. He proudly showed off the tow-behind trailer he'd converted especially for transporting his birds to and from swaps. He little rooster ready to make behind him on the highway.

Peters attributes the success of his little retirement project to the backyard poultry craze — which is in full swing, according to Web Laddow, owner of backyardchickens.com. Laddow's site is the largest and fastest-growing online community of chicken enthusiasts in the world, drawing more than a million unique visitors every month.

Raising chickens, especially egg-laying hens, is one relatively easy way for homeowners to tap into the locavore and slow-food movements. Laddow says, even if they don't have the land or financial resources to raise more of their own food. He also



thinks more and more people prefer eggs that come from honestly raised chickens. And, not least, chickens are fun. They're "a pet that makes you chuckle," Laddow wrote me in an email.

Like Laddow, the poultry business in Springfield had a surprisingly difficult time circulating just what they love about their birds. Some, like Ryan Loren of Bristol, IL, got into the hobby as a child and just stuck with it.

"He started with two little ducks back when he was about 7 years old," said

Breen's mother, Linda — she of the "Don't ruffle my feathers" shirt. "And it's just been exploding ever since."

Some talked up the joys of observing the birds and their distinct personalities. A few mentioned the thrill that comes from producing their own food. Others were clearly collectors, taken in by the delirious breeds of rare poultry stock.

"I say, chicken people are weird, aren't they?" said Charles Clark of Guilford, selling hens from the back of her pickup. "She corrected herself. 'What wouldn't be the right word? They just know what they want!'"

And then, apparently, changes from year to year.

"One year it will be decorative birds," said Wayne Hodge of Harford. "The next year it will be layers." He and his wife, Charlene, were stuffing a small hen with a few herbs and some pet rabbits for sale.

"This year..." started in Charlene Smith's "egg layers." Wayne Smith, of course, the egg layers aren't free. "Ducks are associated with keeping a flock of birds, and these ducks are more."

"People aren't just impulse buying anymore because of the price of grain," Wayne. Marcella of New Haven, the club's vice president, told me "It's gotten to the point where you go to the grain store and drop a couple hundred bucks for a hobby. It's taken a bite out of us."

The costs weren't deterring either — not just in Chelsea and North Farmington of Florida, IL, N.H., who were taking home two 5-week-old Blue Swedish ducklings from Peters' stall.

North, IL, forked over a \$20 bill (a gift from his grandmother) for the birds. Peters finished an empty White Bantam hen and set the ducklings inside. Ben in hand, North gazed at the downy little birds, then shyly suggested to his mother, "We could get another box for more animals." She noted that idea.

"He wants to be a farmer when he grows up," Chelsea said. "That's why for animals you don't eat."

What I did take home from the poultry swap, if not birds, was fresh inspiration. The next morning I headed to my local farm supply store, where I purchased two watering stations, pine shavings for bedding, and chicken feed. That evening Colin and I put the finishing touches on the chicken coop that had been on standby since Christmas.



EDITH FOLK, CHICKEN COOP

And later that week, bright and early, I popped down the road to Double Farm to show him — source of Bay Blankenship's organic eggs, wheels, with their bright-orange yolks, are the best I've ever tried. Hammond had six young hens ready and waiting for me, and a few minutes later they were introduced to their cozy new home.

While I'd obsessed on protecting the chickens from predators, it turned out I should have been more worried about my own ignorance. The next few days were harrowing. First, three chickens escaped the electric net fencing I'd set up around their yard — which sent me racing back to the farm supply store to buy a fence specifically designed for containing poultry.

We arranged narrowways that first morning, chasing birds across the pasture until most were safely contained. The escapees never resurfaced, and I gradually made peace with the fact that my flock of six was now free.

A few days later, disaster struck again. Colin called me at work with this bad news: A red-tailed hawk had killed one of my Black Australorps. Now we were four.

Disheartened, undermanned and frustrated, I ended on the way home and

thought of Wayne Hoge, whom I'd met at the poultry swap.

"We had a mishap problem this spring and we lost three coops," he'd told me. "It makes you want to give up."

But the Hogeys weren't giving up. Wayne was particularly proud of a lovely Indian Blue pullet he took home from the swap. "Now to find her a mate," he said.

For now, my own flock has stabilized. By night, the four hens roost in their snug coops, and by day they explore a small, fenced pasture on our farm. Every afternoon I collect three or four eggs from their nesting boxes. The first two I slipped into a King Arthur Flour recipe for buttermilk pancakes. Over breakfast with a friend, Colin fried up six on our cast-iron griddle. And before the first week was out, I was making mental lists of all the egg-heavy recipes I could call on to put my house to use: omelets and quiches and poached cods, oh my.

Between the new fence and supplies — not to mention the handy discounters — a week was a little easier to tally up, just how much each of these eggs cost us. But I thought of the best farmers and made my resolution: I wouldn't let a ruffie my teachers. ☺

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# Tempting Fate

Ten years ago, the Opera Company of Middlebury consisted of four singers, four musicians, and a narrator performing Georges Bizet's *Carmen* in an unfinished building. A decade later, the company drew more than 600 audition applications for its adaptation of Tchaikovsky's masterpiece. Eugene Oragon, Acclaimed conductor Emmanuel Masson returns as musical director to lead an orchestra of Vermont's top musicians in the company's largest production to date. Dark Kruttsen stars in the title role opposite local soprano Suzanne Kantorski-Mendi as Tatiana. In a series of lyrical scenes, the pair explores unrequited love, tragedy and the passage of time.

**EUGENE ORAGON'**  
Friday, May 30, 8 p.m., and  
Sunday, June 2, 2 p.m. — see  
website for future dates at  
Town Hall, water in Middlebury  
580-88-1info 950-6020  
now@the-star.org

MAY 31 & JUNE 2 | THEATER

## At His Fingertips

In 1994, the 18-year-old keyboardist Castaneda left his home in Colombia to join his father, David, in New York City. He fell in love with the Big Apple's vibrant Latin jazz scene, but his instrument was dismissed. To compensate, the virtuoso picked up the tenor saxophone and translated everything he learned about the genre to the key. The result? An improvisational style that brings groove and bass lines to the strings, and a musician the *New York Times* deems "a world unto himself." The revolutionary artist leads a performance of traditional selections as part of Burlington's Discover Jazz Festival.

**EDMAR CASTANEDA QUARTET**  
Saturday, June 1, 10 p.m. at FlynnSpace  
in Burlington, \$25. Info 969-5999  
flynspace.org



JUNE 01 | MUSIC



Photo: Jeff Korman

PHOTO: JEFF KORMAN

95-02-00-01-10-10

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## SAT.01

## agriculture

**PLANTING DAY** Lucids lend a hand to the land and help get tomatoes off to a good start in the ground. All proceeds go to Camillus by Farm in a Jam. **9 a.m.-noon**. Free. Info: 740-5660.

**ST. JOHN'S BURY PLANT SWAP & SALE** See 01.01.01 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

**CRUCIFER PLANT SALE** Herbalists offer cruciferous plants from a wide range of florists. Also — including flowers by gardeners — are available in the greenhouse. **10 a.m.-noon**. Free. Info: 209-2534. By reservation only.

## art

## WATERCOLOR PAINTING &amp; HOPKINS STORY

**TIME** Suffered by John and artist Susan Bull Ring. Lots of all sorts of watercolor paintings inspired by the artist of John Henry Rogers. 12-4 p.m. evening hours. An illustration of the artist's life. **10 a.m.-4 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534. By reservation only.

## community

## CANTON COUNTY RELAY FOR LIFE

**WALK/BIKE MEETING** Relay for Life is a global event that unites communities to fight against cancer. The event is a relay of walks and bike rides. **5 p.m.-10 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**JERICHO 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION** Local businesses and organizations are joining to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Jericho 20th Anniversary Celebration. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**POP UP CO-OP** The local art and music marketplace. Sales are held at the local art and music marketplace. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**SWIM MEETING** Swimmer Steve Sanders and his team are holding a swim meet. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

## conference

**CIVILTY & FREE EXPRESSION IN A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY: A NATIONAL OUTLOOK** Following a keynote address by Jim Leach, former director of the National Endowment for the Humanities, will feature local speakers. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

## dinner

**ALICE IN WONDERLAND** Alice in Wonderland. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

## education

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT COMMENCEMENT** Commencement ceremony. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

## etc.

**A NIGHT WITH THE KING** Benny "The Butcher" Brinkman. **10 p.m.-11 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**RAMBLING & ART RECEPTION** A day of art and music. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**BURLINGTON WATERFRONT WALKING TOUR** A tour of the waterfront. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**DOWNTOWN BURLINGTON WALKING TOUR** A tour of downtown Burlington. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**100TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION** A celebration of the 100th birthday of the city. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**OLD NORTH END WALKING TOUR** A tour of the Old North End. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**PLANT & BOOK SALE** See 01.01.01 9 a.m.-5 p.m. **POETRY READING & CONCERT** See 01.01.01 7 p.m.-11 p.m.

**FAIR & FANTASY** A fair and fantasy event. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**MUSIC & WINE FESTIVAL** A music and wine festival. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**BURLINGTON DISCOTEQUE JAZZ FESTIVAL** See 01.01.01 10 p.m.-11 p.m.

**POCKEY ROCK & MUSIC FESTIVAL & STREET FARE** A rock and music festival. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

**TOWN'S FIRST** A town's first event. **10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Free. Info: 209-2534.

## ANNOUNCING

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## film

**RURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL**  
**MORE TO LISTEN FOR** North Haven Award-winning Bluegrass artist Robbitt Davis subjects— including Grammy Award-winning jazz musician Mulford Miller— to the jazz stage with concert A. Also featured will be producer Susan Bricker Bellows, RCA Records. Burlington 5 p.m. Free. Info: 852-7987

**IF I WERE YOU?** See P.31 1:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.

**STUBBORN** See P.32 1:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.

## food &amp; drink

**COMMUNITY REAGGERS** The Ladies Auxiliary hosts a heavy feast to the day for members and nonmembers alike. 900 First, Essex Junction 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Info: 570-0700

**ICE CREAM SANDWICHES** Dessert comes first when visitors taste and sample hand-cream ice cream. Then learn about the science and history of the sweet treat. Ballings Farm & Museum, Brattleboro, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Regular admission: \$2.50. Free for kids 12 and under. Info: 842-2252

**STEWES FARMERS MARKET** Features produce and other goods sold at about 100 of local food. First Barn Shop, North Street 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free. Info: 452-3221 or 452-4316. [stewesfarmersmarket.com](http://stewesfarmersmarket.com)

## kids

**WINDUP FOR FLEEBLING** Junior riders ages 5 through 12 develop coordination and learn skills in this aerial method of movement science and outdoor play. First Vermont Museum, Burlington 2 p.m. Free with admission: \$3.50. prepayment info: 494-2552

## language

**FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP** OPMARKES Parties about French! Speakers and listeners together in a casual drop-in chat. French bread. Burlington 5:30 p.m. Free. Info: 363-6452

## music

**A CAPPILLA SHOWCASE** The annual fest showcased at the Regency Hotel. 1000 Main Street, San-Stephen, Vermont. Admission: \$10. 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. prepayment info: 625-648-0100

**ROCK IT!** For the local and by local. Mountain and Berkshire Agribusiness. Shows from 100 Vermont jobs. A special one-hour feature on Vermonters. See summer special. Burlington City Hall Park, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Info: 852-8391

**RURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL**  
**REAGGERS MARIASU-MARTIN** The Grammy Award-winning saxophone finds a gathering moment of songs from the group's new album. Four Hills, Royal Tones, Farm Haven Stage, Burlington 5 p.m. \$25.40. Info: 852-5865

**RURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL**  
**MEET THE ARTIST** DECEMBER: RAGGERS MARIASU-MARTIN. 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Info: 852-5865

**RURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL**  
**TWILIGHT JAZZ SERIES** See P.32 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**MUSIC ON THE PORCH** Live & Sings local emerging songwriters at the outdoor concert. Wednesday, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Free. Information: 852-7987

**MUSIC ON THE PORCH** Live & Sings local emerging songwriters at the outdoor concert. Wednesday, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Free. Information: 852-7987

**VERMONT FISHING** See P.31 1:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. Info: 852-7987

## outdoors

**EARLY MORNING HIKING** Experienced and novice hikers welcome a springtime stroll through wooded trails. State of Vermont, Museum, Burlington 7:30 a.m. Free. Info: 434-2187

## SHAKE MOUNTAIN REHABILITATION

**MR. KIDS** Kids and dogs are welcome to the outdoor dog park. Info: 852-7987

## sport

**WOMEN'S PICKUP SOCCER** Each Tuesday night of pickup soccer. Info: 852-7987

## theater

**THEATRE GROUP** See P.31 2 p.m.

**THEATRE GROUP** See P.31 2 p.m.

**THEATRE GROUP** See P.31 2 p.m.

## sports

**SUPER SUMMER POOL SALE** See P.32 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## MON.03

## agriculture

**ST. JOSEPH'S PLANT SALE & SALE** See P.32 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## dance

**ADAPTIVE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING** Creative movement of folk dances and modern dance. Info: 852-7987

## fairs &amp; festivals

**RURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL** See P.32 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

## film

**RURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL**  
**CHARLES LLOYD AND THE INTRUITS** See P.32 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Info: 852-7987

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- 2) Cast your vote before June 5.
- 3) Winners will be announced on Friday, June 7.

# Spiritualized

Seven questions for Bobby McFerrin

BY DAN HOLLES

music

**O**n his new record, *spiritualized*, producer Bobby McFerrin is reaching for American traditional music. The 10-time Grammy Award winner pushes unique sound on beloved classics such as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "I Shall Be Released" and "Wonderful World," many of which were staples in the repertoire of his father, Robert McFerrin, an opera baritone who was the first black man to sing at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. The younger McFerrin is regarded as a puritan, improviser and boundlessly creative artist. His new project furthers that reputation. It is a joyful and moving celebration of faith, love and the history of our collective American experience.

In advance of his performance at the Flynn Theatre on Saturday, June 1, as part of the Arlington-Denver Jazz Festival, seven days interviewed McFerrin about. We asked him about his new record, how he takes care of his voice and a certain happy song.

**SEVEN DAYS:** I imagine *spiritualized* to have been an intensely personal project, for you can so many levels as it intertwines elements of your faith, family and history. Could you describe the emotional impact creating this record had on you and what it means to you to have completed it?

**BOBBY MCFERRIN:** I always came to music from a place of faith with a sense that the very personal and the very universal are deeply related. So, as a nation, this project is much more than that. But that's a strong statement. I mean, it's like saying these words to people every night. I like the idea of this album out there in the world, and what it says about the world. I hope it can offer some peace and comfort. I hope people sing these songs themselves.

**SD:** One reviewer observed that the songs on *spiritualized* are "part of our collective DNA." Did digging into this material change the way you look at these songs, or perhaps give you a new appreciation for them? If so, how?

**BM:** I'd like to answer that song by song. A few of these songs I heard my father sing; they were deeply important to me, but I had to find my own way of singing them. Other than that, I know how thought of as part of a tradition of people singing together at a religious or social event. Some I chose because of their lyrics and some because of a melody. I wanted to play with all



of these have come closer to me through the process of recording, and now playing them on tour. These songs are a joy to sing.

**SD:** It was obviously important for you to put your own spin on the songs on *spiritualized*. How did you strike a balance between reimagining these songs so that they felt like your own while maintaining the well-spirit of the source material? Or was that even something you considered?

**BM:** Of course. But I've found that usually, the best way to consider things is just to find my way through, keep singing, keep listening. When I think right, it feels right.

**SD:** You're regarded as an incomparable vocal improviser and many of the songs on *spiritualized*, while seemingly carefully arranged, sound as though they were the product of considerable

experimentation. What sort of role, if any, did improvisation play in these arrangements? And can we expect some improvisational fun with them in concert?

**BM:** God [laughs] is wonderful at helping the low knowers, creating a structure and leaving lots of room. He frames the house but leaves the windows and doors wide open. And many of the arrangements started with jamming, playing around with the material, making it "up." In concert we really let loose—I'm just listening playing with the band every night. We go all kinds of places. And we're throwing in some new material as well.

**SD:** The album's title is interesting, three words presented as one, with as spaces as capitalization. It's a play on the word "spiritual" and I imagine most people would look at it and hear their

own impressions of what it means. But what did you intend for that to evoke or represent?

**BM:** Well, I wanted people to think "spiritual" but also to feel the universality of "you all." The spirit is in all. We might think a little about it, it's easily, maybe some people don't think about it at all. But it's there. And everybody has faith. Whether it's faith in God or in somebody they really trust, it's part of human nature. I want the music on this record to put people in touch with their own spirit, with their own faith.

**SD:** I've always wondered about your vocal range. How many octaves can you cover? On a semicircular note, do you have a specific regimen for keeping your voice in shape?

**BM:** It's about five octaves. I use my throat to register a lot. I sing every day, but I think the most important thing I do to keep my voice in shape is just being right. I drink a lot of water, I eat healthy food, I don't go to bed pissed and talk over some. And I try to keep my spirit right, too. I spend a lot of time reading the Bible, walking in the woods, [and] with my family. All of that helps me sing.

**SD:** For better or worse, most folks will likely harbor a sense you with Don't Worry, Be Happy," despite your myriad other great catch phrases and achievements. Does that bother you? Do you ever feel that the success of that song is a double-edged sword?

**BM:** There was a time, back in the song was everywhere, that I was tired of it. I wanted people to listen to everything else I had to do or I felt like they only wanted to hear that song. [and] I felt pressured to be who they wanted me to be. And it was important for me to realize that I was still on my own creative path, wanting to capture and sing solo concerts and do all kinds of things. But my emotions didn't last long. I'm glad the song has brought joy to people. I'm grateful that it's paid for itself. I've got nothing to complain about. ☺

## INFO

Bobby McFerrin at the Outing on 4000 Josselyn Festival Flynn Theatre on Arlington-Denver Jazz Festival (Saturday, June 1) 8 p.m. \$25/\$35/\$45

Photo by

# SOUNDbites

BY DAN BELLES



FANCING DANCING

## Jazzed Up?

Maybe it's because I've been rather immersed in jazz-related preparations these last few weeks and haven't come up for air. Or maybe it's because I've recently been moonlighting covering the comedy show. Or maybe it really is hard to find a candle in the cold November rain — especially when it comes over Memorial Day weekend. But for whatever reason, I'm having a hard time getting excited for the Burlington Deerskin Jazz Festival this year.

(That sound you're hearing? The Seven Days ad sales is awkwardly laughing due to the phone in use for the RDJF office. The joke's yours!) "Yeah, let's kind of do a jerk some times. But he loves jazz, really?" (BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOLLEEE?)

Serlie duane, guys.

I'm not saying I shouldn't be excited, or even that I won't get there by the time it starts this Friday, May 26. Just that my typical giddy excitement for 10 straight crazy days and nights of jazz — and all the other cosmic we shakers under the jazz umbrella — is a little late in coming, that's all. So let's see if I can talk myself off the ledge, and maybe some of you who know similarly apathetic jazz heads on the eve of the 26th annual RDJF.

(And, yes, I did start in 1986. But you start counting with that year '86 you pour fingers and... it's 30.)

Truth is, one of my favorite times to be in Burlington is during the RDJF. Like many of you, I'm intrigued at the opportunity to see the likes of **DAVE MCKENNA** — see the ad below on page

62 — and boss nova superstar **SHANE ELIAS**. And you can't go wrong with anyone named **MARSHALL**. Just ask the UVM class of 2013, who were recently accompanied into the real world by commencement transporter **MYSTIC**. I'm sure **BRANDON** will be seen, too. And don't worry, grade. I'm sure the next generation of Maristas will be just coming up by the time you get a job that enables you to spring for headlining jazz fest shows.

I didn't mention with the words "deerskin" in the title gives me pause, but I'd take a deer on **JAMIE SCORIO** with his **LOVING SHINE**. And I've already started an essay pool on whether **PARKING** **LAURENCE** actually shows up this year after coming last year. I'm giving 8.1 odds that he does, and 8.1 that **RAY VEGA** steals the show anyway.

And then there's **CHRISTEN PARLATO**. Sweet, sweet Gretchen... sigh. (See cover story, page 28.)

Moving on, one of my favorite parts of jazz fest is the school bands on Church Street in the afternoon. Because who doesn't love hearing "In the Mood" six times a day?

For me, the festival's most memorable moments usually happens away from the main stages, in the smaller and sometimes unconventional venues. And here's one **JOHN ANDERSON** and **LOUISIANA** at Regal Kitchen on Friday, June 7, might fit the bill there. So maybe the **RESIDENT JET PARRON'S DUNE AIRCRAFT**

AND **ANNA PARADISE** in the Daily Planet on Wednesday, June 5. Paradise was the star of the fest for me a few years back. BTW **RAY HENRY** singing **WING THOMPSON** songs at Red Square on Monday, June 3, could put some sugar in your bowl. Or your ears. Whatever. And in the show's really on way to even-pinted-thin-jerkish who's-come-out-it's-innocent anyway department, **UNDAIR** is debuting a new surf-rock alter ego called the **WAVE BEANS** on Tuesday, June 4, on the top block of Church Street.

I could go on — and will in next week's column, and probably a site Live Culture blog in the meantime — but there's a lot to cover this week that's non-jazz. Plus, I'll not mistake, I do believe my fingers and toes just started tapping in a spontaneous, swingier fashion...

## BiteTorrent

In other festival news, **NEW TRAPER** has just announced the lineup for his fifth annual Trapped River Music Festival in Stockholm, which is one of the coolest, most intimate acts around. The three-day headlins is slated for August 16 through 18 and will feature 25 bands, a couple of which don't even involve Traper! At least, not yet. Anyway, some highlights include **BARRY BEEBE**, **LOVING THOMPSON**, the **PELOUSI**, **WYLLIN SPEED**, **GLENN AMERICAN** and, of course, **NEW TRAPER** AND **PERFECT THIS WINTER**. The full schedule and ticket info are available at [trappedrivermusicfestival.com](http://trappedrivermusicfestival.com).

In even more festive news, the initial lineup for the Precipice was announced on Monday, and it features pretty much every band on news. For the full list of acts, check out our blog, Live Culture. But while I love you, I can tell you that this dense day festival runs from Friday, July 26 through Sunday, July 28. It's moved to a new location. Following last year's inaugural run at the late 1960s, the Precipice now rolls to college — specifically the lawn behind Burlington College on North Avenue. I should also tell you that anything I write about the festival from here on out

SOUNDBITES BY DAN

**live culture**  
Vermont Arts News + Views

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2011

TUESDAY 11 THE SATURN PEOPLES SOUND COLLECTIVE (COSMIC JAZZ)

**Far Out** To borrow a phrase, the SATURN PEOPLES SOUND COLLECTIVE holds go where no man has gone before. Well, except maybe Ben Re. Led by local composer Brian Boyce, the 20-member "collective" combine a galaxy of influences: from big-band swing and postrock to minimalism and a concentration of otherworldly sound that transcends definition — and maybe space and time. The SPSC took down at the Riptidegrove this Tuesday, June 6, as part of the 2011 Burlington Discover June Festival.

## WED.29

### burlington area

**DINO'S PIZZA** Teva (North) 8:30 p.m. Free

**FLANRY'S** Kenosha 5:30 p.m. Free

**HALALBURGER** South Wharfedale (Denver) 8:00 p.m. Free. Howard & 10th St. (Denver) 10:00 p.m. Free

**J.P.'S PUB** Kenosha (West) 10:00 p.m. Free

**LOUIS & BEYOND** South Wharfedale (Denver) 8:00 p.m. Free. Howard & 10th St. (Denver) 10:00 p.m. Free

**MANHATTAN PIZZA & PUB** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**MONKEY HOUSE** The Warehouse (Denver) 8:00 p.m. Free. Howard & 10th St. (Denver) 10:00 p.m. Free

**MURDER'S MURDER** South Wharfedale (Denver) 8:00 p.m. Free. Howard & 10th St. (Denver) 10:00 p.m. Free

**ON TAP BAR & GRILL** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**RAVENS** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**RED SOX** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**SAN FRANCISCO** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**SEATTLE** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**THE BURGERS** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

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### champlain valley

**CITY LIMITS** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**ON THE WATERFRONT** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**THE BURGERS** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

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## FRI.31

### burlington area

**AMERICAN PATRIOTS** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

**THE BURGERS** Kenosha (West) 8:30 p.m. Free

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# REVIEW *this*

## The Images, *Be There*

(SELF-RELEASED CD DIGITAL COMMUNISM)

There may well be a free spiritual "dream of the '90s" floating around the Pacific Northwest's frequently misinterpreted class. One people still referencing "Portland" (I hope not). But it isn't just another in the dream of the '90s that pollutes Eastern's dream-erotic air. It is within this dream that the debut album from the Images, *Be There*, resides.

Freely by former Vermont resident Peter Schuster, the Massachusetts-based Images deliver conscious early-seen times bluesy pretty much always peppy rock and roll. Try to imagine a 1990s gem — say, Jay's Grace or maybe even Oasis — jumping the pond and setting up shop in Boston. Or, a growing Ed Kowalczyk (formerly of Live) shooting a peppy speedy via bluesman. It would sound pretty badass. And it does.

What sets the Images apart from your typical punkish, green-jumping rock quartet is the focus and care with which they craft their songs. "It's apparent from album opener 'Stronger' that the band isn't content to simply turn up their amps and call it 'rock or whatever.' The arrangements here, complete with intertwining guitar lines, overdriven bass, tight vocal harmonies and sudden stops, commands attention. What could be easy and simple — straight punk — is explored and expanded with maturity and taste from the start, and consistently throughout the album.

"Best of Me" is perhaps the most '90s-voiced track on *Be There*. The lyrics are straight to the gas simple: "I won't let you get the best of me / Like you always do when it's all over me." The guitar guides the catchy melody along, and the drumming, slow build rolled into the middle pulls you in with the clear intention of pushing you right back out. It's still rock and roll, after all.

## Laura Molinelli & Chris Clark, *Cinematica*

(SELF-RELEASED CD DIGITAL COMMUNISM)

Local audiences may be familiar with Laura Molinelli and Chris Clark through their various projects independent of one another. Clark was the front man for the alt-rock band Silver, while Molinelli has carved out a modest career as a songwriter, with four solo albums under her belt. *Cinematica* is the husband-and-wife duo's first collaboration together, a 12-song collection steeped in rock and alt-country and boasting an impressive roster of guest musicians from southern Vermont. Though at times uneven, it's an intriguing addition to the ever-expanding catalog of Vermont-based Americana.

The album opens on a weedy guitar head that evokes a slowed, Morrissey-by-way-of-the-romantic vision of Western ambience, perhaps filtered through a clouded lens of early R.E.M. Molinelli takes center stage, confidently carrying a rocky vein that alerts companions to that of Natalie Merchant, especially

in her 10,000 Maniacs days. At times, Molinelli has a frustrating habit of letting her melodrama slip, to a point beyond lyrical influence that when she's on, which is more often than not, she's compelling for a woman.

By contrast, Clark sings in a more deliberate, less flashy fashion. On "Blood Red Ink," a tune that evokes the sound of Atlantic City, in the verses, his steady delivery recalls Neil Young in deeper moments. With dusky shades of Baby Face Ray or Sam & Sue's Joy Punks, his and Molinelli's duets here never work well together, and a few of the record's finest moments are duets.

The pair orbit the help of some talented friends, and adds John Clark an electric guitar, drummer Dylan Blake and multi-instrumentalist Jim O'Rourke, a highly regarded local songwriter who also composed and co-produced the record. Another talented local couple, Ken Anderson and Rebecca Hall of Hungrytown, turn up on numerous tracks as backing vocalists and, in Anderson's case, as an instrumentalist. Rounding out the lineup is songwriter Ben Campbell (Silver Avenue) on tables.

The crits help is nice, and in several instances — "Stone Tree"



is there clear "Top of the 10.3" heard a seriously flaky, (I hesitate to say) Red Hot Chili Peppers style bass line and lead guitar. While the effect of this track is startling and mostly off-putting, the Images don't stick with it for long. The song builds down into a spaced-out meditation, comes back for a guitar solo or two and then slips effortlessly back into space.

The Images may want to give the impression they're capable of harmonizing multiple ideas and sounds within a single song or album. And *Be There* suggests they kinda can.

The band plays Clifton Cider at Fort Edson Hall in Colchester this Friday, June 1. *Be There* is available at their own bandcamp.com.

DEAN HODD



and "Feed," in particular — the group fleshes out Molinelli and Clark's songs with lush vocal harmonies and top-notch arrangements that get the duo's generally straightforward songwriting. But the spotlight remains focused, as it should be, on Molinelli and Clark. And, save a few fleeting exceptions, they deliver the strong album, you'll expect from a pair of seasoned veterans.

Laura Molinelli and Chris Clark release *Cinematica* with a show at the Junction Town Hall this Saturday, June 3. *Cinematica* is available at [cdhub.com](http://cdhub.com).

DEAN HODD



## The barrels have arrived on Church St.

Don't miss this artistic display featuring local artists with a water conservation ethos in downtown Burlington.



Learn more at [balmwater.org](http://balmwater.org)



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St., Suite 100, 352-5944

**BAKERYMAN** 610 Paul St.  
Birmingham, 352-5944

**BIRMINGHAM VINTAGE CAFE & PUB**  
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# Starting Over

Outlands Gallery, Vergennes

BY MEGAN JAMES

**C**utcliffe and Ross Sheehan have a thing for transforming old. Against their Vergennes home, used to be a shed, and their new gallery, just a few blocks away, was a carriage house long ago.

The little yellow hangover on Green Street opened earlier this month as Outlands Gallery. When photographer Cutcliffe and sculptor Sheehan bought it about a year and a half ago, the bank owned, two-room first floor needed a ton of work. "If you saw it before, you would not say it was inhabitable," Sheehan says. "We must have driven and walked by this place 100 times and thought, 'Should we really do this?'"

They're happy they did. With the help of Sheehan's dad, Jack, who owns Sheehan Construction in Salisbury, they did a drastic renovation, converting the cramped living quarters into a house, each gallery is filled with select artworks from Vermont and beyond.

The place is impossibly charming, in part because of the many architectural details from the old carriage house that are incorporated artfully into the gallery. For example, a slab of old wood that once marked the threshold is now mounted to a crag, like a wall and carved in a shelf.

Other details have become works of art. During the renovation, Sheehan found all sorts of things stuck in the walls of the old building—mostly junk mail from as far back as 1930 and empty whiskey bottles about as old as Sheehan made as Andy Warhol-style collages incorporating a list reveal that he and Cutcliffe acquired on the cross-country road trip, and one contemporary from a piece of 1951 mail from famed Central State's bus band tucked into a seam.

Cutcliffe, 38, and Sheehan, 35, met several years ago in New York City, where she was working as a freelance photographer and he was making art while holding down a job at an art handling company. After a mauling two months apart and trying to relocate to Reno, Nev., for a time, and then moved to San Francisco, where Sheehan showed his work out of his garage studio.

All the while, the couple dreamed of having a gallery of their own to share with their work. "We always thought it would be a cool venture," says Cutcliffe about three years ago, they made another move to Vermont, where Sheehan grew up. They lived for the first ten several months in Warr Addition, but ultimately settled in Vergennes, partly because of the convenient location



between Middlebury and Burlington, and partly because, as Cutcliffe says, "There was just something special about this town. Honestly, we didn't know how many people were doing really creative things here."

March of the work on display at Outlands is from artists Sheehan met



through his work as an art handler. Hudson painter Todd Monaghan, who specializes in "spiritual naturalism," had a show with Sheehan in Town Square. His notable painting "In the Beginning" Sheehan takes up a large portion of one of the gallery's walls.

Modern artist Michelle Rose's abstract paintings are widely textured, they appear to spin and shimmer as you look at them. Seattle artist James Allen makes jaw-dropping book art—he painstakingly cuts around the words and illustrations in books, leaving their high contrast, resulting in a multi-layered, three-dimensional collage.

Local artists are represented too. Fractor craftsman Mark Lavo has made a cool set of Vermont Verde maple bookends and a miniature, greenhouse-shaped sculpture from a fossil of Red slab of Champlain black marble.

Sheehan's artwork and Cutcliffe's photographs are scattered throughout the gallery, too. Sheehan changes his medium regularly. His most recent sculptures of what appears to be a haphazard shape shed down over the gallery's front room. In the back, a series of smaller sculptures incorporate old metal tools he uncovered while clearing out his and Cutcliffe's house

—a lot of tractor machinery, a bent metal probably used to split wood, a drill and an old hook, each mounted in a concrete base.

Sheehan joins, too. "I just started painting again because Todd [Monaghan] brought this up," he says, pointing to "In the Beginning" Sheehan, the enormous painting of a whale breaching the ocean's surface of a Red outer space. "I just looked like so much fun."

Outlands—where the couple named after the part of San Francisco where they used to live—is also about preserving the vernacular. They have Sheehan make custom furniture, while Cutcliffe does wedding photography and photographs art, books. Sheehan's work is on a table in the gallery's back room. Shipping through her portfolio reveals captivating portraits, striking street scenes and surreal nature photographs, one of which—a shot of bright yellow jellyfish floating in blue water—is also pinned on metal and hangs by the gallery's front door.

It's quite a makeover for the little old carriage house. ☺

Outlands, 37 Green Street, Vergennes  
603/248-6000 outlandsgallery.com



Jeffrey Tan. Above shows: © p. 31

**George Shaw** mixed Synthetic media/ Cindy and each page long lines. Both in color and oil painting. The volume: *George Shaw and the American*. Curated by artist. Through June 30 at the University of California Center for Contemporary Art. Info: 916-737-7270.

**John Gaudin** work: sculpture and mixed media. A large sculpture of a woman, one of his first, is in a new 2004 exhibition along with other works. Second artist: John Gaudin. Info: 916-737-7270. Through June 30 at the Center for Contemporary Art. Info: 916-737-7270.

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**'Unraveling & Turning'** "The discussion of climate change must be more than a free-for-all exchange between scientists, lobbyists, corporations and politicians," wrote the organizers of "Unraveling & Turning: A Climate Change Art Exhibit." As part of the Vermont Climate Change Arts Festival, 16 local artists are showing their paintings, sculptures and installations at the Golden Art Gallery in Montpelier through June 30. Sally Lindner, Heidi Moore, Gaila Chasen, Cameron Davis and David Harnett, among others, reflect on the changing environment in an exhibit curated by Peter Nelson and Alison Goodman. Dates: "April 18, 2007" by Sally Lindner



**'Confluence'** Gretchen Alexander, Sacha Perler and Ned Swenberg are working first, artists second. Several years ago, when the trio, who work together for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, discovered a shared interest in nature journaling, they began to keep a collective journal, which they filled with drawings and observations from their daily lives in the state's floodplains and river corridors. Their text art, watercolor and pencil works, as well as the original shared journal, make up the new exhibit "Confluence" at Rinko A. Grapple Gallery in Jericho, May 27 through June 16. Dates: "Confluence" by Gretchen Alexander

**Back to Backlines** get portraits on paper. Through May 31 at the Backlines art space. Info: 916-737-7270.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

**Not to Miss** **Winged Lion** (Art Center) "A bold, new sculpture by the Vermont artist, through June 28 of Governor's Office Gallery in Montpelier. Info: 475-6290

**The King, the Queen and the King** (Museum of Art) "A bold, new sculpture by the Vermont artist, through June 28 of Governor's Office Gallery in Montpelier. Info: 475-6290

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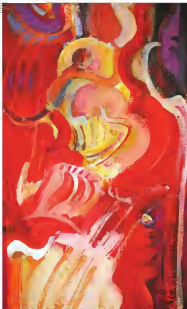
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## Dick & Nancy Weis

Between the two of them, Dick and Nancy Weis work in printing, drawing, printmaking, fibers, paper making and installation — and have more than two decades of teaching experience at Vermont colleges under their belts. In "Parallel," at Portland Seaside Gallery in St. Albans, their separate works are presented side by side so viewers can see how the artists have influenced one another. Dick's abstract paintings are infused with an affinity for the land around in his northern Massachusetts upbringing. Nancy uses intricate assemblages to create a symbolic language and a sense of ritual. Through June 25, Portland "Red Ocean" by Dick Weis.

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## northern

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## movies

## The Hangover Part III

**T**he warden home-packed it in, and you know who I fell in love for? (Anyone who snuggled up 12 hours for *Arts & Letters* then frayed their eyelids has my deepest condolences, it goes without saying.) I pity poor Jenna Wortham, the actor who played the chronically missing-in-action Hong Kong '80s one-liner in this plausibly snafu-lust story, except who someone failed to leverage his participation into super star dom.

He's the Wings of the first some. No, that's not far to Kings. But his move is the only equivalent of Pete Best. You've got to be careful, have really heavy karma or just be stepping really carefully to come out the other end of something as massive as *The Wings* movie trilogy with you across the street was when you went in. The film line here news been kind to Peter. Guess what movie produced his first major role? *High*. He never had a chance.

Meanwhile Bradley Cooper, Kati Holmes and Zach Galifianakis have become household names since the first installment broke all box office records for an R-rated comedy before 1999. In the case of Galifianakis, he's a thousand names most people are not even

capable of generating, and that varying somewhat here.

Ward, Alan (K D), Phil (B C), Stu (K H), and Doug (Does it matter?) have chased three lost adventures, and, believe me, nothing in *The Ringrose Part II* is likely to catch Barthel — or any of his intimates — into poor memory as a note more than he already is. This is one forgettable book.

Todd Phillips is a parasite among Hollywood directors in that you never know whether his last product will be your go-to as a complete crap life's-and-we-were-moment reminder — Old School (2003) and The Hot Chick (in documentary about Phil Spector's Jensen & Meek), and a number of less-than-memorable odd-run-top pictures such as Ice Boys (2001) and, well, I Know That Guy (2008), in addition to a pair of increasingly unnecessary remakes — Family Is Money (2006) and Follow Me Into Darkness II (2009). Two years ago he made a single human being who's over the letter for that entire, anyone who's ever been someone who has.

On the other hand, everybody in the world saw *The Hangover Part II*. It grossed \$962 million globally. The only problem was everybody in the world hated it. *Shrek*



**SEND TO ONE WHO BELIEVES** It is not unlawful then that the next page of your e-mail be the first step toward

diagnosed the franchise's illness with his lacy wrycraunch of the film's first hero's story about a man and a woman. But the question was never "Will there be a sequel?" It had a chapter<sup>12</sup> — no matter what, the money would be too good to leave on the table. Rather, it was "Will the director return himself by making the film die in the series to brilliant and audaciously sublimated as the film<sup>13</sup> die with considerable excitement that I report the answer is a resounding "not even close." The third *Wargame*, unbelovably such even more than the second.

Sure, the filmmaker went out of his way to dispense with the step-cutting practice of the previous installments. The bugaboo is that he and cowriter Craig Karm also dispense almost entirely with the books. I

won't bore you with plot details, let's cut to the chase. *Seven Years in Tibet* is a mammoth 3-act epic on-screen more than twice as long as the last issue of the *Walden* on the small screen. In search of the Chinese prophet Ma Chow (Ken Jeong), Long stays. And not a portion of his audience.

Here's all you really need to know about how badly Part IV blows. Its creation is completed, the theoretically impossible. They found a way to put Melissa McCarthy in front of a camera and keep her from being funny. The screen has a camera in the owner of a Vegas pawnshop. Town ship makes a life. It's a circle I'm not at all happy to see.

Labels, reports, and much more are at [www.pearsoned.com](http://www.pearsoned.com).

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

**Fast & Furious 6**★★★

**F**urrows roads with a title that advises viewers not to try the stunts they've just seen at home. This disclaimer sets a, giles and go, sees at the Mojave 10, and so wonder. The street racing from long ago of two spaces: The Kintaro the Furrows (1900) night, makes copycats. But who's going to attempt to keep from a highway bridge and catch someone else in making or doing a mile try task down a highway, or back a car to a tunnel drive?

As with regular Roman poets (Tyran-  
Gibson) miserably put out, the sixth installment  
of the *Rain & Hurricane* franchise is suddenly  
full of "Double Oh Seven set." "There was  
what we do," Roman objects, but it is a scene  
crying in the wilderness. When you have  
a mega-budget and projected mega-grosses,  
using that extra to feed star, isn't enough any-  
more. Fighting a gadget happy waste-maniac  
(Lola Ivona) plotting to steal a computer  
chipset that could decimate America's military  
defenses is exactly what we do.

That's right! The *Real 8* Kerosene crew, who started as a bunch of working-class natives (and one undercover cop), are working their way up the GI 8 given name. But don't worry about potential tillage like pretty redness. An international network of 8s, PFF makes Sigal look like Zero Dark Thirty. Dwayne Johnson and Gina Carano play federal agents who spend their time globally pursuing the master of the 8s. It's not a



**TABLE 1** *Sample* One of the many studies from Little's review (1) that were identified and found to contain no association of income

garwork, and don't hesitate to lock up an entire nation to save a single hostage. They're perfectly apt allies for Vin Diesel's Dominic Toretto, Paul Walker's Brian O'Conner, and their speed-loving gang, which now runs less on, plus two monthly, across a lifetime.

It makes sense for Trentin to go into the more "dependable" mode after the first show him a pair of his beloved Latta O'Learys.

Kimbrough, who was pronounced dead two months ago, hangs with the bad guys on the present issue. Less believable is that the Ferguson chosen to narrate said bad guys with just cars rather than with, oh, I don't know, a chainsaw.

But it's Fast & Furious, the kick-assy, if anything, distinguishes this franchise from its blockbuster brethren, it's that the action is visible to real life, if you want to call it.

comes to imagine yourself doing just that and throwing punches then getting a speeding ticket. Justin Lin, who helmed the movie via two installments, makes coherent, exciting, and pure, including an epic midway tunnel self-gi and a completely worked-out pursuit on a Spanish highway (Justin's never to think about the hole again).

The upturning, multi-ethnic ensemble is less as long-term work, too. If D'Amico's casual meeting and Wilbur's wooden good looks get on your nerves, you need only turn to the wine-drinking, one-upping duo of Gibson and Chris "Loudon" Binkley, or to shy Hong Kong and Gal Gadot as love-interest gal friend, for solid entertainment. These pointers into the film's disarming, to avoid tedium, reminding us it's still a B movie are an A bud got, though with the recent misadventure of

That includes one does arrive in the form of Rodriguez, whose immense character is not a lot as the man to decide how the footballers. To me, it's a little more by the dealer's, certain reasonable has using "family." But of Part 3 Rodriguez is going to go all James Bond, the script should perhaps at least have paid up some to the notion that millions of other lives could be at stake.

As well. Whether revolution stands or falls, these guys and their fans are gonna

54 臺灣的民主與人權





## Model clients

## BACCHUS RE-ENTRANCING THE CITY

**WON'T BE LONG**★★★ Will anyone Terry Clark beat, a 1990 All-American, to win a 12-month, \$100,000 prize in the Marvel Superhero Saga. Where? (Kiss Kiss Bang Bang) (Black Street) With Robert Downey Jr., Daphne's Pal Zee, Guy Pearce, Rebecca Hall and Ben Kingsley. (Lions PG-13)

**HUGOBoss** Jeff [Takes the letter] Nicholas doesn't let anyone get in Massachusetts about two young boys who have a fight and has some involved in his romance. Had them McCausoughy. Beese. Wilson again. The Wheeler and Jacobs lefted also. [Dial over PG 13]

**OBITUARY** In his satirical novel *Blackwater*, Tom Clavin set his story up in a desolate planet. Humans abandoned long ago, giant Earth Rats live in the WALL, it is a life some readers find disturbing. Andrew Pritchard and Morgan Freeman's star Joseph [JOHN] Leguizamo's directorial debut, *Blackwater*, is out. (R, PG-13)

SEE THE DIFFERENCE AND POWERFUL + + 1.13

The Israeli legendary Zion Builders, Alon is Wanderlust continues with his eye candy penguin in the *WILSON* CD, in which the statue magazine played by James Franco, later the first director of a fantasy world. With only back, follow the Zion Builders show in 13 night club and stadium shows of 1, Frank Sinatra after 25 hours. With Richard Weiss and Michael DeMarco. [3] (see 100)

## PAUSE &amp; DISCUSS 4.12 Is there a difference between...

Brotherway/DC. It's a semi-casualty space, from all-around  
Multiplatform. Dwayne Johnson and Mark  
Wahlberg play fathers and brothers who get  
involved in crime and find out it's easier to pay  
them than to actually do them. They find a way, and  
back numerous times. With Robert Wilson and  
Anthony Mackie. (2010/05/10)

**THE PLACE BEYOND THE FINES**★★★★ Ryan Guckling plays a hustler who is court-martialed when he turns in a woman he supports. He's back in the United States court-martialed for desertion (Billie Yveland). **Confidence**. Two Minutes. Bradley Cooper and Ray Liotta also star. [A2 from R]

**REVIEW** ● Rod's higher-earliest, Harriet Auguste Heron (Michele Bonquet) and her son, Alexander, Jean (Vincent Baillieux) are the subjects of two French biopics, which celebrate their extraordinary lives with one young model taking the summer of 1924. *Julien* (Benoît Poelvoorde) is 12 (1998).

STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS+++ [Disc 39999](#)

directed by J.J. Abrams pulls its spine in the second act to focus on "Din, here there and the Enterprise is battling a 'one-thriller' weapon of mass destruction in a 'one-war-world' and forward combat with the end. With Chris Pine, Zachary Quintan and the others. (3.5/5) PG-13

## NEW ON VIDEO

**BANK SALES •** *U2* A suburban family finds an investor by mistake, and another faces a crisis, in the thriller starring Ray Russell, Josh Hamilton, and Sakata Goro. Scott (Prest. Legion) Stewart directed. PG-13

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Arch herself struggling to survive even in the regions to compensate her father's crimes in this drama set in postwar Germany. With Sander Redford and Kim Mai no. Cate Shortland directed (R) (TV-14)

## MOVIES YOU MISSED & MORE

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## Valhalla Rising

This week in movies you missed: I love about a yard of routine. What's that all about?

... except this one is more trippy than rousing  
to be honest. Thanks for the award!

**N**athan Winding Refa, director of *Drive*, returned has a new movie (again with Ryan Gosling) at the Cannes Film Festival this past week.

Spectators booed, and critics largely by-passed it as a lachrymose spectacle of meaningless violence.

So what better time for us to watch one of Winding Refn's past iconic spectacles of meaningless violence, which is still a lot more interesting than most directors' movies? *Valhalla Rising* shipped out the stars in 2000 and is now available on Netflix, iTunes and various other services.

So, it's 3000 A.D. or thereabouts, Scotland I guess, and this dude with one eye (Macle Micklelure) has been a slave for, like, ever. He can kill anybody with his bare hands, usually in a few seconds. But

Though the challenge from a local source of value and art finds (i.e., a video of an) two are even broader: Many Top Mineral Check-out the Live Clicks blog on Friday for progress and when possible, several local businesses.

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  - whiplash - back strain
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  - hip/glute strain
 Also Acute Vertigo (BPPV)
- No referral needed if your insurance requires none.
- We will communicate with your Primary Care Provider.
- Call 371-4242 for an appointment.



[illegible]

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

## LULU FIGHTRALL



**CAVITY GRAVITY**

So, when did you first have visiting the dentist?

Right...

Well, don't worry. We're making it as stress-free as we can.

Except this kind is the only place on earth that has root canals.

Chris Madden

Top-left panel: A man asks, "MY WIFE'S TAKING A VACATION?" and a woman replies, "NO, I'M TAKING A VACATION." The man is looking at a calendar.

Top-right panel: A man asks, "MY WIFE'S TAKING A VACATION?" and a woman replies, "NO, I'M TAKING A VACATION." The man is looking at a calendar.

Bottom-left panel: A man asks, "MY WIFE'S TAKING A VACATION?" and a woman replies, "NO, I'M TAKING A VACATION." The man is looking at a calendar.

Bottom-right panel: A man asks, "MY WIFE'S TAKING A VACATION?" and a woman replies, "NO, I'M TAKING A VACATION." The man is looking at a calendar.

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(Best Foodie Friend)



The newest edition of 7 Nights  
served up 500+ restaurants, select  
breweries, vineyards  
and cheesemakers, plus dining  
destinations outside Vermont.



**Curses, Follies Again**

Looking to steal copper wiring to sell as scrap, Duane Newhouse and Charles Raymond Moore, both 22, used rifles to shoot down high-tension power lines in West Virginia's Henry Mountains Wildlife Management Area. Newhouse was electrocuted before he touched a live cable on the ground, according to Putnam County deputies and National Park Service rangers, who found his body entangled in a downed line. (Charleston Daily Mail)

When deputies signaled a warning vehicle to pull over in Franklin County, Fla., the driver later identified as Bryan Zungo, 28, fled on foot. After kicking a police car away, he hid behind a water treatment plant, where he was struck by an alligator, which bit his face and arm. Police authorities charged Zungo with breaking or ignoring fences, fleeing and a hiding, and driving with a suspended or revoked license. (Tampa Bay Times)

**Heck of a Job, Fugate**

To evaluate the impact of natural disasters, the Federal Emergency Management Agency uses the "Waffle House Index." The informal index, as named by FEMA head W. Craig Fugate, has three levels. If the local Waffle House is up and running, serving a full menu, a disaster is classified as green. If it is

running with an emergency generator and serving only a limited menu, its status is yellow. If it's closed, badly damaged or totally destroyed, it's red. Fugate chose Waffle House because the chain has a large number of branches in tornado-prone areas and a robust emergency management plan. Even though the tornado that hit Moore, Okla., closed the nearby only Waffle House, FEMA classified it as yellow because "we are hoping to get a generator." Waffle House official Kelly Thorsrud said the day after the tornado hit, and "serve a limited menu, maybe a full one." (Irvine's The Guardian)

**Unclear on the Concept**

After a man in Springfield, Mo., called 911 to complain about his Jimmy John sandwich, authorities sent the same man his made-sandwich call for non-emergency issues 77 times since 2010. "We have a few calls like that," Assistant 911 Emergency Communications Director J.R. Walsh said, citing one ending here to spell "Wah-lah," another requesting andrews and another who said he needed a woman because he had taken a Viagra pill, but his girlfriend cancelled their date. (The Springfield News-Leader)

Police reported that Jarvis Nation, 24, admitted calling 911 in St. Petersburg, Fla., approximately 83 times in one

evening "because he wanted Kool-Aid, burgers and a weed to be delivered to him." Instead, he was arrested. (Tampa Bay Times)

**What'll You Have?**

The price of lamborne hares has been climbing at U.S. bars and restaurants, according to a study by Mooseharts based research firm Restaurant Business, whose president said the leading cause is hupsters and eating Police Mike Rabbon. "It has become quite fashion able," Chuck Ellis said, noting that the price of expensive craft beers has also climbed, but at only half the rate of sub premium beers, "specifically PBR." (Los Angeles Times)

**Homeland Insecurity**

Eugene Fedrino, 49, the former head of the Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General in McAllen, Texas, was indicted as a scheme with DHS agent Marco Rodriguez to falsify investigative documents to disguise a lack of progress by their office. (Associated Press)

**Weekend Worriers**

Even though Father's Day and Mother's Day fall on Sunday, Astral Drive Elementary School in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, announced it would no longer celebrate the occasions so children who are part of non-traditional fami-

lies won't feel left out. Instead, students were asked to write the names of all the people who supported them in their lives on a large tree hung in the school gym. (Canada's CTV News)

**Slightest Provocations**

Maxim Hic, 18, a student at a British boarding school in London, Norfolk, was sentenced to four years in jail for hitting a fellow student who refused his request to borrow a bottle of soy sauce. (Harris's Daily Mail)

Authorities accused Barry Streight, 51, of using a bulldozer to destroy three houses, destroy another house, and crash two ships, a pickup truck, lawn mower and other property in Glendon County, Wis., because he was upset that a neighbor's fence made it difficult to maneuver his bulldozer and other heavy equipment he owns. (Fort Angeles' Press-News Daily News)

**Close Shave**

After an unidentified man called 911 in Larga, Fla., to report on a rip lesion, he told responders his suffered injuries because he wanted a haircut and found a cat of shaving cream on the kitchen stove. The cat blew up, sending aluminum shards at his face. "Not a good idea, in any situation," Largo-Rice Division Chief Dore Minson said. (Tampa Bay Times)

**BISS by Barry Bliss**

\* Admit it—this is your first time \*

**LED R All**

MOST QUANTYLAND VICTIMS ARE ON THEIR THIRD MONTH OF HUNGER STRIKE. SO GUARDS ARE FORCE-FEEDING THEM.

# RED MEAT

Timeless Funnies of Fun

From the secret files of  
MAX GANNON

You know how you have to screen an egg in the shell and feed before it's gone?



Well it ain't the same deal with a tomato.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T KNOW? WHERE DO YOU THINK TALKERS COME FROM?

# THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

WELL? I'M A LITTLE BITTER--RE-PLAYING LIFE FROM AN ANIMAL, WHERE PEOPLE BELIEVE IN GOD!



WITH ME, I'D WORK AND SURELY EXHAUSTED THE THING WITH HER LIFE! YOU GOTTA THINK THE LORD, RIGHT?



DO YOU THINK THE LORD?

NO...

I AM I GRATEFUL TO A HYPER-TECHNICAL, ANIMATED BODY FOR SPARING ME--WHILE REVEALING MY CONSCIOUSNESS AND KILLING A DOUBLE BROWN OYSTER PEOPLE, INCLUDING SMALL CHILDREN!



THAT'S ACTUALLY A PRETTY CHARMING THING, BUT--BUT BY THE WAY, I'M GONNA GO TO THE LAB, NOT TO MIND.



ALARM WE'LL BE BACK AFTER THESE MESSAGES!



BUT THANKS FOR ASKING!



# FUNGUS

A COMIC STRIP BY  
JAMES KOCHALKA  
(COURTESY LAMARCA OF VENTURA)

©2011



THE END?



## II

## Gemini

(May 21-June 25)

In Japan it's not rude to slurp while you eat your ramen noodles out of a bowl. That's what the Lonely Planet travel guide told me. In fact, some Japanese hosts expect you to make sounds while you eat, they take it as a sign that you're enjoying your meal.

In that spirit, Germans, and in accordance with the astrological omens, I encourage you to be as unapologetic as you dare this week — not just when you're slurping your noodles, but in every situation where you've got to express yourself unambiguously in order to experience the full potential of the pleasurable opportunities. As one noodle slurper testified, "How can you possibly get the full flavor of soup, don't slurp?"

**Taurus** (April 20-May 20) A few weeks ago the planet sat in close to Rahu/Ketu. Whod'ya know that this close would be considered the next day. What was his intention? A big storm, a bomb threat or an outbreak at school? None of the above. He decided to give students and teachers the day off so they could enjoy the beautiful weather! Look he had intended. I encourage you to make a little more in life during days Taurus. Take an extended day trip—maybe several of them. Cook yourself a gourmet meal, relax away and indulge in spontaneous celebrations. The weather is so perfect that you probably on the off that life is otherwise too.

**CANCER** (June 25-July 22) Herbs thought them in to Joseph Lubing, Wittenstein: "A person with his imprisoned in a room with a door that's unlatched and open, instead of being as long as it does not occur to him to put either their push their door" (it like to be open, then his description fits you right now, doesn't it). What are you going to do about it? Tell me! Is it? No? Refractory again with me? The god is better like. Without either accepting or signaling my proposal. Simply adopt a neutral open-minded attitude and experiment with the possibility. See what happens if you try to put the door open.

**LED** [July 29 Aug. 22] If you have been waiting for the right moment to perfect your party skills, I suggest this might be it. Is there anything you can do to lower your ambitions? Would you at least temporarily curtail clipping, and a chronic state of bust are you prepared to commit yourself to extra amounts of randomised dancing, mutant storytelling and unpredictable prongplay? According to my reading of the cosmological arena, the cosmos is nudging you in the direction of rabble-raising rivalry.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23–Sept. 23) Where exactly are your power spots? Virgo? Your bed perhaps, where you rejuvenate and recharge yourself every night? A place in nature where you feel at peace and at home in the world? A certain bending, where you consistently make good decisions and make efforts

CHECK OUT HOW EFFECTIVE SPANISH BEING

advise you to give them a little love. They are on the verge of serving you even better than they already do, and you should take steps to ensure that happens. I also advise you to be on the lookout for a real power spot. It's available.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Reverence is one of the most useful attitudes. When you respectfully acknowledge the wisdom of any of something greater than yourself you do yourself a big favor. You generate extra energy and learn gratitude when you are healthy for your body as well as your mind. This is not a time to not satisfy the desires of your mind, but to satisfy the desires of your heart. To be a Libra is to have a night experience a dream state at one point in your life who have benefited from their greatest bliss. What about you Libra? What makes you reverent? How is it in evidence to make the deeper insights of this almost state of consciousness.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) While you ponder nihilism, you're also pondering love. You're in love with an American in 1934. He placed you in London newspapers. "Wanted" for a hazardous journey. Small wages. Little or no food. Months of a campaign. Disasters. Constant danger. Accidents. Deaths. Honor and respect. Love and even of success. "Would you respond if I came on line that if you say I'm a fool? I hope not. It's true that you sense of adventure is not matching up. And I suspect your feelings for women engagements with the good luck of disaster. That is the just risk engaged in such brooding windows. But, I believe, in such bravery, the serenity will be cutting you into risk of suffering severe discomforts."

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23-Dec. 21): Is rather not a "giving" quality," and the virginal chamberlain Jinn Japhet. Her attitude reminds me of a little of Salvador Dali. He said, "It is never difficult to paint. It is either easy or impossible." I suspect you, Sagittarius, may soon be in either or states like those. You will want to give everything you've got (or be nothing at all). You will either be a little

grown - or has totally stuck. Luckily I suspect that giving it oil and being in the sun will perk it up.

**CAPRICORN** (July 20-July 26) In 1994, Mandela's Mandela began his fight to end the system of apartheid in his native South Africa. Eventually he was elected as the first black president of the country. He remained in jail until 1990 when his government moved to international pressure and freed him. By 1994, apartheid ended. Mandela was elected president of his country and won the Nobel Peace Prize. He lived in 2004. Mandela was still considered a hero by the United States and had to get special permission to enter the country. Many who probably don't have an ambiguous past or citizenship had a third chance to go back to their home country for time for you to dissolve your attachment to any outdated attachments even if they're not really old ones.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) As a renowned artist, photographer and fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld has overflown with creative experience for 50 years. His imagination is wild and futuristic, yet highly practical. He has produced a profusion of fashion and stuff. "The very down to earth" he has said, "just not like earth's" with make that your mantra for the coming weeks. Aquarius, you too will be very down to earth in your own unique way. You'll follow your quirky intuition but always with the intent of elevating it. [www.astro.com](http://www.astro.com)

**PISCES** (Feb. 18-March 20) In the following passage, French novelist Georges Perec invites us to renew the way we look upon things that are familiar to us. "What we need to question," he says, "is those concrete things our little manners automatically use to lead the way we spend our time: our myths. To question that which seems to have caused horror to intrude us." A meditation like this could renew and even thrill you. *Perec* (I suggest you test your ability to be more free-minded by the small wonders and obvious marvels that surround you, like the accident.



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Air Force EIS Report

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